



Take fast hold of instruction let her not go:  
keep her for she is thy life. *Prov. Ch. IV.*



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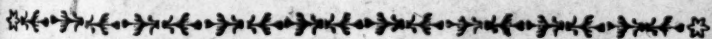
THE  
FRIENDLY INSTRUCTOR;  
OR, A  
COMPANION  
FOR  
YOUNG LADIES  
AND  
YOUNG GENTLEMEN:  
IN WHICH  
Their DUTY to GOD and their PARENTS,  
Their CARRIAGE to SUPERIORS and INFERIORS,  
AND  
Several other very Useful and Instructive LESSONS,  
ARE RECOMMENDED,  
In *plain and familiar* DIALOGUES.

---

V O L. II.

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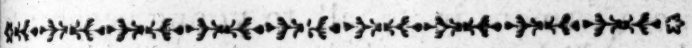
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FAMILY





## FAMILIAR DIALOGUES.



### DIALOGUE I.

*Between Philip and Henry, concerning the Importance of early RELIGION.*

*Philip.* **M**OST welcome dear *Hal*, you are come in very seasonably to release me from my tiresome employment.

*Henry.* Pray, my dear, what have you been engaged in that is so disagreeable ?

*Phil.* I have read above half a long sermon, and must have ended it if you had not come ; and I am sure I am weary enough now.

*Hal.* I hope you are not so weak as to be tired with reading a sermon, and I dare say your mamma would not set you to any but what she thought might be useful : pray what was it about ?

B

*Phil.*

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*Phil.* I don't well know ; the title was, the Pleasure and Advantage of early Religion, but I am sure I found none in reading about it.

*Hal.* I am sorry to hear you say so ; I think it is a very agreeable subject ; I wish I might read it.

*Phil.* I'll lend it you willingly when I have read it out ; but my mamma bought the book on purpose for me, and there are six or seven more sermons in it, all to young people : so that, till I have read them, she would be displeased if I lent it ; and you, who are so happy as not to be forc'd to such dull work as I am, will I dare say be soon sick of it, if you begin.

*Hal.* Oh ! *Phil.*, what you call my happiness, I account my great misfortune, and often wish I had such a mamma as yours.

*Phil.* I am sure you have a very good one, that is excessively fond of you.

*Hal.* I own it ; and yet this very thing I daily mourn the want of, which you seem to think an affliction ; I mean the advantages of instruction you have, join'd with as kind and tender a mamma as mine.

*Phil.* She is very good to me for every thing else ; but whatever you may now think, I believe you would not like it to be continually talk'd to about things you knew nothing of.

*Hal.* She, doubtless, does it that you may know them.

*Phil.* She is never the nearer then ; for I  
neither

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neither do, nor desire to understand any thing of the matter.

*Hal.* Nay *Phil*, now you quite shock me ; I can scarce believe my own ears.

*Phil.* Why ? what have I said that frightens you ? I thought no harm, I am sure.

*Hal.* What ! my dear, no harm in saying you neither understand religion, nor desire to do it ? For my part, I can't conceive what you could have said more profane ; I wish you would think of it.

*Phil.* Nay, now you make me worse than I am ; I am sure I was never accounted profane ; what ! do you take me for an atheist, that believes there is no God, because I wish my mamma would let me alone to enjoy the pleasures suited to my age, and not fill my head with such things as, if I was to think of them, would only puzzle my brain to no purpose ? When I am as old as she, perhaps I may like it as well.

*Hal.* But you told me that you were reading of the pleasure and advantage of early religion ; now I could not suppose but you must think that these were pleasures and advantages suited to your age. What do you imagine that these good men that write such books, your own mamma, and even God himself, join to impose a falsehood on you ? For is it not in the word of God, that the ways of wisdom (which are there the same with those of religion) are ways of pleasantness ; and all her paths, paths of peace ? If

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you have heard so much as you complain of, you must have heard of this scripture.

*Phil.* Heard, yes; I have read it many times to-day, for that was the text. And I don't pretend to disbelieve the truth of it, so that I am not so bad as you would make me; say what you will: I told you before, when I am older I may perhaps, understand and find the pleasure of it. But I wonder, that either these good men, or my mamma should think because they may find it pleasant who are come to maturity of judgment, that such as we should, who are in the gayest and giddiest part of life.

*Hal.* But herein again, my dear, you talk most inconsiderately; for is not early religion recommended, nay commanded by God himself? so that here you cannot come off; no to say, that the calling in question the judgment of your superiors in this matter does not bespeak that degree of humility I had hoped you were possessed of.

*Phil.* Pray who is there of our age that puzzle their heads about such things? If they must whilst they are young, it does not follow that I need to do it yet; I hope I am not growing old presently.

*Hal.* And are you sure of an hereafter? O my dear, I beseech you think what you are depending on! How many round us are yearly call'd away younger than we? And can you think 'twill be a sufficient plea at the bar of your Judge, that you thought you were too young to attend to so serious a business as religion?



# FAMILIAR DIALOGUES. 5

igion? Or will you dare to tell him, that you had more pleasant and profitable employment to engage your thoughts and time; much more suitably to your age; that if you had lived longer you had some thoughts, of applying to it, according to the many exhortations given you; that you therefore hoped this intention to serve him hereafter would be accepted, and excuse your neglects?

*Phil.* I am not so ignorant as you make me neither, *Hal!* I know well enough that younger than I die; nor do I think of making any such excuses for myself before God, as you have framed for me.

*Hal.* But then, pray, my dear, what is it you depend upon, should you be call'd away speedily and suddenly as many are?

*Phil.* Why to tell you freely, 'tis but seldom that any thoughts of such things come into my mind; but when they do, I satisfy myself with this, that I have never been guilty of any gross sins, and have as much religion as can be expected in one of my age.

*Hal.* That you have not been left to commit those sins which too many are guilty of, is to be sure matter of comfort; but I should be glad to know what it is that you account a sufficient degree of religion.

*Phil.* I go constantly to Church, we have family worship twice a day, and sometimes I pray by myself too; and you find, by what I have said, I have a great deal of reading in good books besides; so that if I don't spend



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enough of my time in religion, I don't know what young person does.

*Hal.* These indeed are branches of our duty, and therefore to be perform'd; and did you engage in them as you ought, you might call them parts of religion; but as the uneasiness you before express'd at reading so much, gives me room to fear the other work of this kind in which you are employed, is equally disagreeable to you, I can't think any thing you have mentioned deserves to be call'd by that name. For you can't imagine, if you will but give yourself leave to reflect, that God, who has bid us give him our hearts, and has told us he knows the secrets of them, will accept of outward forms instead of sincere worship, or that you can impose upon him who sees the workings of your mind, and that aversion you have to, and the weariness you discover in, his service.

*Phil.* I begin to see some reason in what you say. And if God requires the mind should be engaged in worship, and there is no true religion without, I must indeed give up all my pretences to any.

*Hal.* Then I hope you will quickly be convinced how much you are indebted to your mamma for her frequent instructions, and putting such books into your hand, as, if attended to, should by the blessing of God bring you to a sense of the importance of religion, and excite your desires after it. And since by your own confession, you are now obliged to own it was a sandy foundation on which

## FAMILIAR DIALOGUES. 7

which you built your hopes, you will, I trust, be sensible that it highly concerns you without any delay, to apply seriously to an affair on which your eternal happiness depends; that you may have solid ground to think of death with comfort, and to meet it with joy, should it speedily approach to you. Then would you, my dear, know by your own experience the truth of what you have this day been reading, that wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness. Give me leave then to prevail upon you to make the important trial.

*Phil.* Well *Hal*, I am now amaz'd at my thoughtlessness about these things. I took you up short at the beginning of this discourse, and asked you whether you took me for an atheist; and truly now I am convinc'd that I have lived like one; for tho' I boasted then of my believing there was a God, I think I am the worse rather than better for such a belief, since I have been so senseless as to imagine he would accept of appearance instead of reality; and look on that as a service perform'd to him, wherein only my body was engaged, my thoughts generally like the fool's eyes, being in time of worship wandering after every vanity. Well may I blush for shame that you who have not my advantages should be my instructor. What thanks do I owe you!

*Hal.* If you are brought to see your duty and interest in this matter, give God the praise, who often makes use of such weak instruments that the power of his grace  
may

## 8 FAMILIAR DIALOGUES.

may be the more display'd. I am a poor teacher.

*Phil.* You have been a good one to me, I am sure. But I entreat you to go on, for I am like one that has been wandering all night, who at day-break finds his error, yet knows not how to get into the right path without some kind and friendly conductor.

*Hal.* You have made a very proper reflection on your present case indeed; but then you are to remember that to make the comparison hold, you must imagine that this person was warned of the danger he was in of wandering; offer'd, yea intreated to accept of sufficient light, direction, and assistance; and yet, fancying there was no occasion, went obstinately on in total darkness.

*Phil.* You have drawn up my character to the life, indeed, *Hal*, and your just addition, I think, naturally leads me to see my first step, which is with the deepest shame and remorse to confess and bewail my wretched folly, and earnestly implore pardon.

*Hal.* 'Tis true, repentance as it is the first step to reformation, so 'tis one great branch of religion, the whole of which is comprized in these two words; repent and believe.

*Phil.* But what is it to believe? My own inward sensation now tells me somewhat of the nature of repentance, for I see I have acted most contrary to reason, to go on thus regardless of God, or my own immortal soul. And he might now justly refuse to receive my

## FAMILIAR DIALOGUES. 9

my submission, and forgive my sins; which if he should I am undone, and that for ever.

*Hal.* Herein lies the true nature of faith, or that believing you enquire after, that notwithstanding it is thus with you, which calls for deep repentance, here is no room for despair; Christ has purchased a free and full pardon for all who believe in him; to him therefore are you to apply, and in him repose your trust; under his conduct are you to put yourself, sincerely desiring to receive the instructions of his word and spirit, and to obey all his commands as your king and governor. And if you thus repent, and thus believe, and evidence the sincerity of both, by your hatred of all sin, and love to God and his ways, you will soon find the truth of what you have been reading, that there are pleasures in religion to which you have hitherto been a stranger; pleasures that vastly exceed what you have found in youthful delights. For to return to our simile, if the wanderer in his bitter reflections on his folly, spies his offered but refused guide again near him; and upon his humble acknowledgements and earnest prayers, ready to forgive him and assure him of his constant assistance, whilst he follows his directions; what joy must hereupon take place in that breast so lately oppress'd with grief!—And thus encouraged and thus assisted, with what delight and alacrity will he go forward?

*Phil.* Dear *Hal*, how happy are you, that have made such a progress in those paths I am  
now.

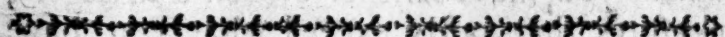


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now to enter on ! nay, and could find them out of yourself, though I have been blind to them when they were set before me.

*Hal.* No *Phil*, God made use of means to open my eyes, as he usually does ; for tho' that was wanting at home, a kind neighbour, who knew how it was, finding I lov'd reading, often got me in to read with her ; and as she put the properest books into my hand, so would she endeavour to impress what I read, both on my understanding and conscience. 'Tis thro' her kind care, under God, that I know any thing of religion. But I have stay'd till I shall be expected home, therefore must go.

*Phil.* Well, *Hal*, I shall soon call in return ; for I shall long to have more discourse with you.



## DIALOGUE II.

*Between Dorinda and Sophira, on the alteration made in Lucinda.*

*Dor.* **D**EAR *Sophira*, you can't think how much it concern'd me, that you could not go with me to see *Lucinda*.

*Soph.* I would have waited on you if I could conveniently have done it, but my sister's illness is a great confinement to me ; for as I can divert her a little, it makes it the easier



FAMILIAR DIALOGUES. 11

to my mamma, so that I did not think proper to ask her.

*Dor.* Nay, then you are worse than I imagined; I thought your mamma would not let you go.

*Soph.* Indeed my dear I believe that is but too true, that I may be worse than you have thought me, as you are I am sensible partial in my favour: but I don't think myself so in this case, because I thought I was more in the way of my duty to stay with my mamma, and do what little I could to lessen her fatigue, than I should have been to have left her alone with a sick child, only to make a visit.

*Dor.* What then, must you be chambered up, if your sister lies sick ever so long?

*Soph.* No, not always; have not I been one afternoon with you already? My mamma is rather for contriving to give me diversion, than desiring to hinder me; but this makes me the more unwilling to leave her, unless it be to go to my most intimate acquaintance; and 'tis more pleasure to me to bear her company in her affliction, as I see it is so agreeable to her, than it would be to spend my time in visiting. Don't you think now that I act right herein?

*Dor.* I must own you do, and that you have called my sin to remembrance this day! For when my mamma was sick, I was far from acting as you have done, tho' I plainly saw how much she desired my company, and how pleased she would be if I offered her any little assistance; and that she thought my staying away

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away from her so much, a very unkind treatment of one who had in my illness so tenderly nursed me ; but to me a sick room was a dull place ; and, for want of reflecting on what either duty or affection must have led me to, much more both together, I took it into my head, that it was natural for young persons to hate such confinement, and therefore it was excusable for me to decline it.—Herein you have set me an example of child-like duty and affection, which I hope for the future I shall labour to follow.

*Soph.* I am sure your's has, in many respects, been of great advantage to me ; and if in this, or any other instance, I can be so happy as to make you any small return I shall be very glad. But pray was your visit so pleasant, that you wished me to enjoy it with you ?

*Dor.* Yes, indeed it was ; and, I dare say, you would have been equally delighted had you been there.

*Soph.* Then I hope you have discovered some alteration in *Lucinda's* temper and behaviour, which I should be extremely glad to hear of, as a religious turn would render her a most agreeable friend.

*Dor.* It will so, and this is the pleasing prospect we now have.

*Soph.* Pray give me a little of your entertainment.

*Dor.* When I went, *Sophronia* was alone in the parlour. She received me with an air of pleasure I never discovered in her before.

fore, and said, you are, *Dorinda*, a very agreeable guest, for *Lucinda* has been wishing to see you some time, and I hope this visit will be an introduction to a greater intimacy, and as I shall gladly encourage such a friendship, so I have the pleasure of believing 'twill now be far more desirable for *Lucinda*, than what she has been but too much delighted with. Whilst I was thinking for a proper reply to so unexpected a speech, *Lucinda* entered the room, and *Sophrania* left us together; when she, taking me by the hand, said, You little imagine, dear *Orinda*, how oft I have wish'd to see you within these few weeks; but I fear'd the entertainment you had at your first visit, would have discouraged you from making a second. I replied, I wonder'd you should have such a thought, for both *Sophrira* and I took notice of the courteous reception you gave us; and I added, you would have been with me now if you had not been prevented. She answer'd, you don't understand me, *Dorinda*; I mean on account of the disagreeable company that was here.

*Soph.* Disagreeable indeed: What could you reply to that?

*Dor.* I said, that I must own I was sorry it happen'd so, that we came on a day when she had company that gave themselves so great a liberty in discourse as those young ladies did; that *Sophrira* and I were too much concerned to hear the sacred name of God abus'd as it was by them, tho' we with pleasure observed she did not follow them herein;

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and that, amidst the profusion of empty and impertinent discourse they so plentifully pour'd forth, we discern'd so much modesty and good sense in her replies, as gave us room to hope she would not be tempted to make such her chosen companions long, as we feared by what we saw they then were.

*Soph.* You spoke your mind very freely, but I think in an inoffensive way. What answer could she make?

*Dor.* With tears she replied, ah! *Dorinda*, what could you then see in me that gave you any hope, I know not; tis true, as you say, I did not fall in with their profane language; the strict Education I have had forbid that, at least laid a restraint on me; for had I been left to go on, none knows how soon I might have been drawn to a more exact imitation of them, to the heart-breaking grief of my dear mamma, and the ruin of my own soul!

*Soph.* She express'd herself very seriously and sensibly indeed; but could you find out what was the means of giving her so different a turn of thought.

*Dor.* Yes; for upon my saying I was heartily glad to hear she had herself discovered the snares that amidst such companions she was encompassed with. She replied, Oh *Dorinda*, you are mistaken; I went on blindly, and was deaf to all the kind and pressing exhortations of the most pious and tender parent, who often with floods of tears entreated me to consider what I was doing. She often pleaded, that if I would thus continue



to be a companion of fools, I must with them be destroyed, and that my punishment would be so much the worse another day, as my advantages for knowing and acting better were greater than theirs. That therefore she, who might as a parent command me, did yet as a friend exhort me to have some pity on my own precious and immortal soul, if I could not be moved with the thought of bringing down the grey hairs of my widow parent with sorrow to the grave. These discourses of her's generally melted me into tears; yet alas! no sooner did an opportunity offer of being with my favourite companions, but I readily fell in with it, and all my mamma's instructions were quite forgot.

*Soph.* This is a lively picture of the first approaches of ruin to many a young person who has had a religious education; thus they stifle the convictions of their own consciences, and give ear to the solicitations of their wicked associates, who seldom rest till they have brought them to the same degree of hardness and stupidity they themselves are arriv'd at.

*Dor.* 'Tis true; and this seem'd likely to have been soon the case here; for she own'd that tho' her love to her mamma was always so great that she could not bear to see her uneasy, and had therefore often made a resolution not to exceed the time fixed for her return, if she ever went with them again on any party of pleasure; yet when she has urg'd her mamma's expecting her as a reason

to break off, they have as with one consent banter'd her out of such a foolish regard to a mother; told her, now she was old enough to know what she lik'd better than one who, being past these gaieties of youth, had forgot what it was to be young. These, *Dorinda*, added she, were the instructions I had abroad, and to which (thoughtless creature that I was!) I gave so much attention, that I began to look upon myself as abridg'd of innocent liberties, and to regard my dear mamma as one that exercised an unreasonable authority over me. This dreadful length was I run (to my shame may I speak it!) when God, by an awful and awakening providence, stopp'd me in my career, laid me on a sick bed, and even brought me to the brink of the grave.

*Soph.* I heard some time ago, that she was very ill of a surfeit she got by going with them somewhere; but I did not know that she was so bad.

*Dor.* Nor I neither; but it seems her life was despair'd of, and when she thought she should die, and came to reflect on the occasion of her illness, it cut her to the heart that she should extort so unwilling a consent from her mamma, to a journey for which she should now pay so dear. But, said she, I can't say I carried my views beyond the grave, till those two ladies you met here came to see me; they appear'd concern'd at my illness, but upon intimating that I believ'd I should die, one of them in her usual profane way, begg'd me not to indulge such melancholy

lancholy fancies, for she did not doubt but I should soon be able to take such another tour. Yes, yes, I don't question it, said the other; pray *Lucinda*, don't think of leaving us to go into t'other world yet, we can't spare you so soon; come, I'll tell you what charming diversion we had last night. This discourse quite shock'd me; and I replied, I am past diversion now, nor can I bear to hear of it. The distress of my mind was indeed too great to be express'd. And is it certain there is another world? thought I, as I have been taught, and as even these poor profane creatures seem to believe! What will then be my state, who must enter into it before I have taken any measures to prepare for it? The anguish of my mind had so great an influence on my body, that I was soon to appearance changed for death, and too far gone to have any sense. But it pleas'd God to give me a revival: and when I first recovered sense I found my mamma weeping over me. My dear child, said she, can you speak once again to your poor mamma? Yes, mamma, said I, God has given me time to beg your pardon, and ask you to pray that he will forgive me, if there is any hope. Hope, my dear, replied she; yes, I bless God, there is abundant ground of hope. On this, she said a few words more by way of encouragement and left me, not daring to talk long to me; and I incapable of farther reflection, fell asleep. I had a good night, and found myself greatly alter'd for the better in the morning. But the more

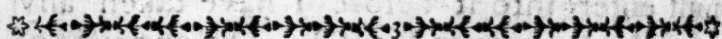
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capable I was of thought, the more did the distress of my mind increase; my mamma indeed did all she could to abate my fears, and raise my hopes. Just as she had given me this account, company came in to drink tea with her, so that the rest I must wait for till next time we meet.

*Soph.* I thank you for this part, which has rais'd my desire to see her.

*Dor.* She promised me a quick return to my visit, and then I hope you'll meet her.

*Soph.* You may depend on it I will, if I can.



## DIALOGUE III.

The same continued.

*Between LUCINDA and DORINDA.*

*Lu.* I Have made this quick return to your visit, *Dorinda*, to show how acceptable your's was, and set you such an example as I am desirous you should follow.

*Dor.* 'Tis very obliging; and I'll assure you, I shall not be backward to imitate you.

*Lu.* Shan't we have the pleasure of *Sophira's* company?

*Dor.* Her sister died last night, which has prevented her.

*Luc.*



*Lu.* I am sorry for their affliction, and our loss of her company.

*Dor.* As to the child's death I think it is a mercy, for it was never like to be well, tho' I suppose the mamma will be greatly afflicted, for she was exceeding fond of it ; but I am sorry it happened at this time, to prevent her coming; and yet, when I consider, I am sensible how absurd it appears, but to frame a wish that the poor child's life and misery should have been prolong'd, that I might have had my desires; and I think nothing ever open'd my eyes as this incident has done, to see the unaccountable folly of my fretful impatient temper, which so often gives uneasiness to myself and others about me: how unreasonable 'tis in me to expect every thing should fall out just according to my fancy, or give way to discontent when it does not. You, I believe, know nothing of this; I am ready to envy you for your calm and easy temper.

*Lu.* My dear, 'tis very hard indeed, if you envy me that seeming little good I have in me! there is, to be sure, a great deal of difference in natural tempers, and you are so far in the right, that I have not so great a mixture either of the passionate or fretful in mine as some have; but if you find that in your's which you complain of, I doubt not but, as you are sensible of it, you will soon be able in a great measure to overcome it; and then your's will so far have the advantage of mine, as

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as a virtuous habit is beyond a natural endowment.

*Dor.* I hope I shall both pray and strive more against this weakness, and shall rejoice if I may be enabled to gain some conquest over it. But I'll not detain you longer on this subject now, as I impatiently long for the rest of that remarkable account you was giving me concerning yourself. If you remember, you had mentioned your being on the mending hand, and the continuance of your solicitude, together with the care your mamma took to abate your fears and encourage your hopes.

*Lu.* 'Tis true, here I stopt; but alas! the conflicts I met with stopt not here; and had it not been for the seasonable exhortations, instructions, and cautions of my dear mamma, it seemed to me as if I must either have sunk into deep despair, or, in order to free myself from such uneasy guests as my own thoughts were now become, have fallen in with the temptations I had to return to my former thoughtfulness amongst my old companions, who came frequently to me when I was so bad.

*Dor.* I fancy their company, in such a state of mind as your's, must be very disagreeable.

*Lu.* 'Tis impossible to describe the workings of my thoughts on these occasions. The very sight of the persons I had been so fond of, filled me with anguish, as it recalled to mind those days of vanity I now so bitterly re-

# FAMILIAR DIALOGUES. 21

repented. And tho' for the most part their society was as really ungrateful to me as it had been delightful, I was often filled with fears, lest I should again come to like it. And how to get rid of them I knew not. But one day, when my mamma had been talking to me in a most encouraging manner, I found my hopes rise to a higher pitch than they had ever before done, and I was then (for the first time) so free with my mamma as to tell her the concern these visitors gave me, and ask her what I should do to get rid of them, without giving them cause of offence.

*Dor.* That was indeed a very prudent step, for I think it was a difficult case.

*Lu.* My mamma told me, if it pleased God to give me his grace to persist in my present pious purposes and resolutions, she apprehended it would be no hard task; as they would soon grow weary of my company, when they found I took no delight in any of their vain amusements, and empty, nay profane converses, as she believed I now accounted them; and especially, my dear, added she, if you can but get so much courage and resolution, in a modest and civil way, to show your dislike of their profaning the name of God; and that contempt of a serious and strict course of religion, you say, they so often express. And as it hath pleased God so wonderfully to spare your life beyond all expectation, this great deliverance from death gives you a very proper opportunity of letting them know what different views of eternity;

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nity, the prospect of its near approach had presented to your mind; and the sense you now have of the value and importance of that time you have lavish'd away, with the resolution you have made, in dependance on that grace which hath thus open'd your eyes to see both your duty and interest, to improve the little remaining time of life in a better manner than you have done what is past.

*Dor.* This was very good advice, but my difficulty, I must own would have been to have got courage to comply with it; I have great reason to confess a great deficiency in this respect, thro' a false shame, which keeps my mouth often clos'd, when I am sensible it ought, nay sincerely desirous it should be open'd, to put in a word to bear my testimony against what is wrong, and in favour of religion.

*Lu.* I doubt not I should have been as much at a loss in this respect, had not the late views I had of the eternal world still left so deep an impression, as in a great measure carried me above all other considerations; and seem'd to inspire in me a resolution and firmness of mind, with a freedom and openness of temper, to which I was before an utter stranger. Whilst my mamma and I were in this discourse, one came up to tell me two of these ladies were come. On which my mamma said, now, my dear, is the time for you to make a trial of the advice I have given you; and I pray God so to open your lips, that your mouth may shew forth his praise. Remember



member *David*, who put up this prayer, and resolves he will speak of the testimonies of God, and will not be ashamed even before kings. And who knows what an effect it may have upon some of them; and therefore let pity and compassion for these thoughtless creatures, that are running on in the broad road to ruin, fill your breast, and inspire a proper tenderness into your discourse. I thank'd her for these instructions, and she left me and sent them up. That short interval I employed in lifting up my heart to God for his assistance. When they enter'd the room I met them, which they express'd much pleasure at my being able to do. I replied, I have the greatest reason to be thankful that I am thus far recover'd. Yes, said *Florella*, did I not always tell you, you would not die; but I verily believe you fancy'd you should, and that made you worse than you would have been. Well, come, says *Cleanthe*, don't let's bring any of those dull thoughts into her mind again; the danger is over now, and you begin to look fine and well, *Lucinda*; I hope we shall have the pleasure of seeing you amongst us very soon. You must mend as fast as you can, to get out of this moping place. I thank'd them for their kindness in coming to see me, which must be but a very disagreeable employment to them. As to my danger; I said, I believ'd that was visible to all around me, as well as to myself; and therefore the fears I had entertain'd were but too well grounded, as I was very sensible I

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was far from being prepar'd for another world. But pray, my dear, said *Florella*, don't put on such a gloomy countenance, nor speak so mournfully about it, now you see you are not going. God only knows replied I, how much longer I have to continue here. He has, blessed be his name, given me some time and space for repentance, and preparation; I wish I may be enabled to improve it as I ought. I beg of you, *Lucinda*, said *Florella*, let's have no more of these melancholy fancies, now you are well enough to enjoy yourself and friends; good now, don't talk of repentance and preparation for another world. You see you are returning to this again, and if you were not, I know nothing you have done to repent of; but I suppose your pious mamma has been continually preaching to you, as you know she used to do when you were well; and you, affrighted with your illness, and incapable of your usual diversions, have given such ear to her as has fill'd your head with these dismal whims. It is nothing else, depend upon it, my dear, said *Cleanthe*; for I remember, when I was sick once, my grandmamma used to give me such lectures, and I was so foolish as to mind them. Nay, after I was pretty well, she telling me that God had given me my life that I might improve it in preparing for a better, I very orderly follow'd her advice, and spent a great deal of my time in reading and prayers, and was as strict as a nun; but when I got again among my old associates, they soon ban-

banter'd me out of my preciseness; and we shall, I doubt not, quickly get you into another temper.

*Dor.* These are persons that seem to glory in their shame indeed. I think but few run such lengths of open profaneness and contempt of all religion; I could not have had patience to have heard them out.

*Lu.* Perhaps not, especially with those profanations of the sacred name of God with which almost every sentence was intermix'd; but you are to consider, these were what had been my chosen companions, here was no alteration for the worse in them, and therefore what I had to do, was to bear that as an affliction which had been my delight, till I could in an inoffensive way get free, or be the happy means of altering them.

*Dor.* You argue very right: Pray what return could you make to what they said?

*Lu.* I told them that I could answer every part of their discourse; but as such conversation was, I knew, disagreeable to them, I should only tell them, that I hoped and pray'd my present views of things might be lasting, and my resolutions too firmly fixed for any temptations to remove. That I was very sensible it was but too common for sick-bed impressions to wear off as *Cleanthe's* had done, and that then they generally left the mind more harden'd; but I hoped this would not be my case. That as to calling them melancholy whims, I could assure them they were entirely mistaken, the bitter reflexions I had

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made on my mis-spent time, were founded on the highest reason? and the hopes I now had that God had pardon'd me and received me to favour, that he would own me as his child now, and bestow on me a never-ending happiness hereafter, had given me a pleasure far superior to all I ever felt in the gayest delights of sense. Upon my word, said *Florella*, you will make me quite sick; I must leave you, if you will go on with this cant. And I too, says *Cleanthe*, for I am afraid this distemper of your's is catching; I feel such qualms that I dare not stay. I beseech you, dear ladies, said I, whatever you think of me, don't make so free with religion itself, particularly you, *Cleanthe*, who have known what serious impressions are; remember there will come a time when you will wish you had continued to follow that good advice you now deride; and, Oh that you might both see your true interest before it be too late! And so you would very kindly wish us like you, would you? said *Florella*; we are extremely obliged to you. I told them they could not certainly blame me for my desires after their true and lasting happiness; and that as we know we can't live here always, and know not how soon we may be called hence, I wish'd no worse for them than I did for my own soul, which is, that it may be entitled to a better life in heaven when it leaves this world. Well, said *Florella*, I hope your sermon is done; I thought we must hear it out, but I can stay no longer. Nor I neither, said  
*Cleanthe*



*Cleantbe.* I told them tea was coming, and I would promise to talk no more in this way; 'twas all in vain, keep them I could not. Away they went, and I have not seen one of the set since. For these making their report to the others, they instead of coming, have joined to teaze me with letters, which I am still answering.

*Dor.* Well, I think you have got rid of them purely; and I suppose your answers won't induce them to converse long this way.

*Lu.* I suppose not, for they all seem but the more fully bent to do evil, except *Cleantbe*, who is at present under some returning convictions; and I had a letter from her to-day that pleased me much, she seems to want to come to town chiefly to talk with me.

*Dor.* Happy will you be, if God makes you the instrument of good to her.

*Lu.* 'Twill be an honour indeed, if I may do any thing to glorify that God I have so long dishonor'd.



## DIALOGUE IV.

*Between Dorinda and Sophia, on account of a disagreeable Visit.*

*Dor.* **W**ELCOME, my dear *Sophia*, I am rejoiced to see you again at my house.

*Soph.* You might be sure I would gladly embrace the first opportunity, to thank you for that pleasure your friendly epistles have given me in this melancholy time of confinement; particularly the last, with the remaining account of *Lucinda*, which has yielded me great delight, and excited my longing desire to be more intimately acquainted with her. But pray how went you through your yesterday's fatigue you mentioned; I heartily pitied you, and shall be glad to hear you are like to get off from so disagreeable an acquaintance in a civil way.

*Dor.* I hope I am in a fair way for it. I believe my guests were not much pleased with the entertainment I gave them; and that at least we shall keep from an intimacy to which they have seem'd much forwarder than they now appear to be. It was indeed a very  
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tiresome afternoon. *Censoria*, *Gaudia*, and *Haughtitia* all came; but which you may be sure I was not very sorry for, *Simplicia* was prevented.

*Soph.* That was some comfort, as by that means you might possibly have a small share in the conversation, which in her company I hear is hard to gain.

*Dor.* She does indeed, verify the saying of the wise man, that a fool is known by the multitude of words; for as he elsewhere expresseth it, her mouth poureth out foolishness; but how tiresome soever it be to hear her, I often think her more an object of pity than anger; as to be sure her natural parts are very weak, she seems to have just sense enough, with the help of a good memory, to render herself very impertinent in company. But when I survey the malice and ill-nature of *Censoria*, the vanity and emptiness of *Gaudia*, and the scornful pride of *Haughtitia*, it raises justly my indignation; and I own my patience is put to the utmost stretch to behave with any decency towards them. They found me reading, which *Gaudia* took notice of, and said she had heard I was a great reader; but for her part, she had not a taste polite enough for that sort of entertainment, nor had she time for it, having a large acquaintance, dressing, visiting, and receiving visits engross'd most of her's. *Haughtitia* replied, that is not my case; I can find more time for reading than I can books to read, for I am as curious in them as I am in my

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acquaintance, and one may see twenty before one meets with any that are worth reading, either for the subject, sense, or style, tho' I believe I have got as good a collection as most. On this *Censoria*, who had taken up the book, said, this is a curious subject, I'll assure you, The Government of the Passions! I suppose, *Dorinda*, you are going to turn Philosopher. I replied, so much Philosophy as to enable me to comply with the rules there laid down, I must own I long'd to be mistress of, tho' I fear'd attaining it. She, after having look'd a little into it, threw it down on the table, saying she would leave me to the study of it, for she saw nothing in it that she understood. And immediately asked me if I had not heard of the whimsical turn *Lucinda* had taken, whereby she had lost as fine a set of acquaintance, as any girl of her age and fortune ever had.

*Soph.* A fine set indeed! and a great loss she had sustained! What could you reply? I suppose you did not fail to say somewhat in her vindication.

*Dor.* I said, I know very well that *Lucinda* has, since her late illness, much lost her relish for those gay amusements, which before ingross'd too much her thoughts and time; and that she judg'd it both her duty and interest, to act for the future more like a reasonable creature and a christian, and accordingly devotes part of that time she was wont to squander away in mere vanity, to the peculiar exercises of religion; whilst the rest is spent,



## FAMILIAR DIALOGUES. 31

spent, if not in so gay, yet in far more rational employments. I saw they had scarce patience to hear me out; looking at each other as in a surprize: when *Haughtitia*, with a scornful smile, turning to *Censoria*, said, I think *Dorinda* has given us a full proof, that she is herself a good proficient in that part of philosophy she is studying; for since she has arrived so far as to be able thus gravely to justify *Lucinda* in her retreat from the world, and all the diversions proper for one of her age, no doubt but she herself will soon retire too. No, I hope not, said *Gaudia*; for I should be very sorry to have the pretty, genteel *Dorinda*, turn a recluse with *Lucinda*. So indeed should I answered *Censoria*; as for *Lucinda*, I don't know any great damage that is done by it; for I heard one of her intimates say she was as well lost as found, it being always work enough for them to keep her tolerably easy in her way of life: but I take *Dorinda* to have a far better taste. And I too, said *Haughtitia*; or else I assure you, I'd not enter this door.

*Soph.* Well, on my word, they play'd cunning, now, besetting you with flattery.

*Dor.* They did so; but as it was pretty visible, it had no effect. For I replied, indeed ladies I pretend not to lay claim to those qualifications you have been severally pleased to confer on me; but I must beg your pardons if I once again attempt to set you right in your notions of *Lucinda*. She is far from attempting to retire from the world. You  
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very well know, notwithstanding their birth and fortunes, which render them considerable in the eyes of the world, those *Lucinda* has been so intimate with, have had a much looser education than she, or any of us have had. You cannot be insensible, that they take great liberties in their speech, profaning the name of God; and in their actions in divers respects, too notorious to be hid; and therefore, when *Lucinda* was brought to serious reflection, is it any wonder she no longer delighted in such society? nor is it any thing more strange, that they have not only forsaken but derided her for it. But that she is therefore grown unsociable, is far from being the case. Had you been here yesterday, I believe you would have discerned no alteration in her, except having heard of it, you had watch'd her the more narrowly, as I find you have now done me, on my speaking in her favour. This speech silenc'd them all. And opportunely tea came in as they were all at a full stand.

*Soph.* I think you stood it out courageously; for three against one is hard. But go on.

*Dor.* I shall give you no farther particulars of our conversation, as at tea and after, a variety of subjects came upon the stage; only observe to you, that poor *Gaudia* quite tired me with an account of dress and fashions, which the others animadverted upon; *Haughtitia* in her scornful, and *Censoria* in her detracting way.

*Soph.*

*Soph.* I think *Censoria* was the worst to bear with; for as bad as vanity and pride are, ill nature and detraction appear to me the most mischievous to Society.

*Dor.* It is so: and therefore how little soever I lik'd it, I pass'd over in silence *Gaudia*'s description of the dress of such and such persons as she nam'd, and likewise some lofty expressions of *Haughtitia* concerning those she thought beneath her. But the remarks *Censoria* made, I could not hear and sit mute; for as she could let no one pass without some spiteful reflection, either on their dress, person or character, as I happened to know somewhat of them, I would not suffer one to be dismiss'd till I had put in a word by way of commendation as we went along. This I saw *Censoria* took, and could perceive it stung her to the quick. And now, *Sophia*, by this account you may judge how likely we seem to wear off an acquaintance, which I began only to oblige my pappas; and which therefore I should rejoice if they would drop on their side. And that it may be so, as I have made this beginning, I shall not fail in the returns I make to the visit, to carry on, if possible, to a greater length my freedom with them; which I hope will prevent my having any more of that work.

*Soph.* But perhaps if you come to talk more plainly to them, you may be a means of convincing them of their faults, and that will be far better than breaking off.

*Dor.*

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*Dor.* I think there is no likelihood of it, these having each a darling passion indulged to so great a degree ; and no sign of any regard to religion, as you may perceive by what they said of *Lucinda*.

*Soph.* This makes the case indeed much more doubtful, for a sense of duty will excite to far more vigorous attempts to subdue any ungovern'd passion, than any other consideration. But your discourse may bring them to some reflexions which may have a happy effect. And particularly poor *Gaudia*, who, by what I have heard, has every qualification that would render her an agreeable companion, were she not so wholly engrossed by mere vanity. Could she be brought once seriously to consider how mean and low those subjects are that take up her time and thoughts compar'd with those nobler objects that demand her attention ; what mere trifles fashion and dress are, to draw the chief regards of a rational creature, design'd for a never-ending state ; I can't think but it would have some influence on her conduct.

*Dor.* You are so far right, that there seems most hopes of her ; she is to be sure very affable in her behaviour, and good-humoured in all her discourse ; and I believe her being left so young by her mamma, has been a great disadvantage to her ; for as her pappa is very rich, has no other child, and is extremely fond of her, he never thinks any thing too costly for her. And thus being from her infancy indulged in following every new fashion



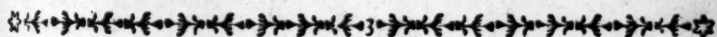
# FAMILIAR DIALOGUES. 35

fashion, it seems to be grown into a habit ; and the contrivance for dress, appears to her the most important affair that can come before her.

*Soph.* What is Mr. —? I thought he was a sober man ; has he taken no pains to furnish her mind ?

*Dor.* He is, I believe a very religious person, and has not been wanting according to his opportunities ; but he is little at home, and I fear she is fallen into the hands of such as have been an obstruction to her improvement in true wisdom.

*Soph.* Well, these are all so many motives to excite your serious attempt ; and who knows how far God may succeed it ? however, you will find satisfaction herein.



## DIALOGUE V.

### FRIENDSHIP in AFFLICTION.

*Between Emilia and Orinda.*

*Emil.* WELCOME, my dear *Orinda* ; this day of your return I have with no small impatience waited for.

*Orin.* 'Tis with pleasure I see my *Emilia* again ; I hope you are all well.

*Emil.*

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*Emil.* We are now, I bless God; but my dear mamma has been so ill, I was afraid I should have lost her.

*Orin.* Pray how are all my old acquaintances; particularly dear *Silvia*?

*Emil.* She was pretty well yesterday; and, in general, I believe they are all so.

*Orin.* Pray what is the matter then? for I perceive you speak faintly.

*Emil.* Have you not heard that *Silvia's* pappa is dead?

*Orin.* Not a word of it! I asked my sister how all my friends did, and I remember she look'd at my mamma, who replied for her, they are all pretty well. I suppose she was loth I should know till I had dined; for as I always took her for a very dutiful child, it must to be sure be a great affliction; but I hope she will wear it off in a little time, as she could have (I think) no very tender affection for a father that show'd so little regard for her. But pray how has he acted at last? I hope he has not discovered his partiality in his will, but has at least left them equal.

*Emil.* Yes, he has left them equal indeed; but that is, *Orinda*! the most shocking part of the story. This equality amounts to nothing but their cloaths.

*Orin.* Is it possible? You have so surpriz'd me, I can scarce believe my ears! *Lyfander* dead! and left nothing for his children! poor *Silvia*!

*Emil.* 'Tis but too certain a reality; I have never been one day from her; so that I have



*Hannah presenting of Samuel to Eli.*

I. Sam. Ch. I.

page. 35



*The Friendship of David & Jonathan.*

Sam. Ch. XX.





# FAMILIAR DIALOGUES. 37

have been the melancholy eye and ear witnesses of all she has gone through.

*Orin.* And is she not quite overwhelmed? I am sure my blood runs cold with thinking of her.

*Emil.* She was greatly distress'd all the time *Lysander* lay, which was about a week.

*Orin.* Pray what did he die of?

*Emil.* His Horse threw him, and broke his leg, which was attended with a violent fever.

*Orin.* Was he sensible any of the time?

*Emil.* He had intervals, in which he seem'd to be under great concern.

*Orin.* Did he continue his partiality to the last?

*Emil.* It rather appeared to be turned the other way; for *Silvia*, who soon apprehended his danger, discovered the deepest concern for him, and was very assiduous in her attendance on him; and he expressed, when sensible, the most tender affection for her. As for *Flora*, she, imagining no danger, looked on a sick chamber as too great a confinement, and so indulgent a parent's company was no longer agreeable, when he could neither procure for her, nor accompany her in any party of pleasure; so that she was generally below, amusing herself with one trifle or another.

*Orin.* A very different deportment indeed, but, what might be expected from their widely different characters. And yet I wonder that *Flora*, whom I took to be good-natur'd,

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tho' giddy, should show no concern on such an occasion.

*Emil.* When she found there was no hope, she took on at a sad rate; and when he was dead, she for a time appear'd so too: but there would have been no fear of her sinking under her grief, had she not soon understood that she had with her father lost her all. On this account she is indeed as yet inconsolable, and we are afraid of the event; so that notwithstanding my superior affection for *Silvia*, I have not been able to refuse her the largest share in my pity.

*Orin.* She is to be pitied to be sure, but I can't be of your mind, for you know we say charity begins at home; and sure then, tho' we ought to compassionate others, our pity must work the strongest towards our dearest friends, and their griefs touch us more sensibly.

*Emil.* 'Tis very true, we must needs find ourselves the deepest sharers in their distress. I only mean, that I think *Flora's* case on many accounts far the most pitiable. *Silvia's* behaviour, through the whole of this trying time, has been such as hath seem'd to raise the passions of wonder and esteem, rather than pity. And I hope I shall ever have cause to bless God, that his providence call'd me not only to visit but almost to live in that house of mourning. For the guardian *Lysander* has left, who is *Evander*, knowing our intimacy, begg'd I would be with *Silvia* as much  
as

as I could, which my mamma was very willing I should.

*Orin.* I well know *Silvia* had long ago renounced this world as her portion, and placed her supreme happiness in things far superior to what this whole globe can furnish out. But yet to be left fatherless, to be stript of all at once, and so very unexpectedly, appears a shock too great for the strongest mind to bear up under with any degree of calmness, without extraordinary support.

*Emil.* Yet thus has the power of divine grace display'd its efficacy on her young and tender mind. She mourn'd her parent in a manner becoming a dutiful and affectionate child, that had learn'd and labour'd to practise the duty of resignation. Indeed when she carried her thoughts beyond the grave, it would sometimes almost shock her tender frame. Yet here she strives to let in all the glimmerings of light that appear, by reflecting on the pleasure with which he heard her read to him in some intervals of reason, thanking her for it, and telling her, he hoped that God whom she served would be her constant father and friend, and take care of her though he had not. Then with the utmost earnestness he begged of God to pardon his sins, and with that petition in his mouth expir'd. And for my part I have thought it my duty to encourage these hopes in her, as 'tis not for us to say what God may do at last, in a way of sovereign grace.

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*Orin.* I am of your mind herein ; for tho the case of a sick-bed repentance seems too dubious to encourage any to trust to it, I think for surviving friends to hope the best is erring however on the charitable side, and is certainly most for their comfort. But pray how long had he been dead before the finishing part of the tragedy was presented ?

*Emil.* But two days. *Evander* finding immediately by the steward there would be nothing for them, resolved not to administer, and was obliged to inform them, on account of the preparations they were to make for their mourning, and the manner in which he was to be buried.

*Orind.* This was affliction on affliction indeed ! I suppose you were not witness of the reception she first gave it.

*Emil.* Yes, I was : *Evander* did it with a great deal of prudence and tenderness, at first only telling them he found it was proper to make a very private funeral, *Lysander's* circumstances being not what was imagined, which he was very sorry for on their account. What ! said *Flora* hastily, had not my pappas five thousand pounds in stocks, besides his estates ? He always told me I should have my share in every thing, and what he had there besides. At which *Evander* shaking his head, *Silvia* said, Sir, I plainly see my sister is greatly disappointed ; for my part, I have thought some time that my poor pappas's expences must be beyond his income,  
and



therefore shan't be surpriz'd to hear that we have nothing to trust to but the estates; nay, nor shall I much wonder if they are not clear. Then *Silvia* replied he, I hope you will the better bear to hear that the one is sold, and the other—— Here he stopt. What! says she, is mortgag'd I suppose? He not presently answering, she said, I believe I too well forebode all is gone! Oh! said *Evander*, can you, *Silvia*, thus unmov'd, entertain such a suspicion? Can you quit your worldly all, I hope I can, said she, divine grace assisting me; for I trust I have a better inheritance, of which I can never be depriv'd. *Evander* was going to reply, when he was call'd out. As for *Flora*, 'twas with difficulty we made her believe *Evander* was in earnest; and when she did she fell into the utmost distress, in which she still continues. But they will be wondering why I am not there; I'll go and give *Silvia* the pleasing news of your arrival. Won't you step to-night?

*Orin*. If I can possibly. Pary tell her how deeply I sympathize with her, and how much I long to see her.



## DIALOGUE VI.

The same continued.

Between ORINDA and AMASIA.

*Orin.* **I** Am heartily glad to see my dear *Amasia* again.

*Amas.* By mere accident I heard you were come, and I think I may say it was for the first time that the passion of joy has been raised in my breast this month past.

*Orin.* You surprize me! I have enquired after you since I came home, and I was inform'd you are all well.

*Amas.* Yes, I bless God, we are all in good health except my pappa, and he is much as when you went; but you have, I doubt not, heard of the unhappy change made in the condition of one in our little knot of intimates. 'Tis this that has so oppress'd me, and perhaps more than any other of her friends on one account.

*Orin.* If, as I suppose, you refer to poor *Silvia's* affliction; *Emilia* gave me the melancholy account yesterday, soon after I came, and I am sure I sincerely sympathize with her,

her, as I believe do all her friends: but we ought not, *Amasia*, to suffer either our own afflictions, or those of our dearest associates, to sink so deep into our breasts, as to banish all joyful and pleasing sensations, since we, and they, even at the lowest ebb of outward comfort, have yet streams enough to feed our gratitude and joy. What your particular cause of grief may be on her account I am a stranger to.

*Amas.* To tell you freely, my own forebodings presage, that I am likely soon to be a second instance of the same kind.

*Orin.* To be sure, *Amasia*, such a providence calls loud to us her friends to consider the uncertainty of all earthly enjoyments, and ought to be a lesson to teach us the vanity of raising our expectations from any present prospects. Yet to fill our breasts with distressing fears, lest we share a like catastrophe, I think will be a great evil, especially in us who are eye-witnesses of that heroic and truly christian manner in which *Silvia* bears up under her's; we ought rather to hope, that should we be called to the same trial, we may be favour'd with like supports. However you know our blessed Lord has said, sufficient to the day is the evil thereof; and therefore he has kindly as well as most wisely, made it our duty not to take any anxious thought about futurity.

*Amas.* I believe I have far more ground for my fears than you imagine, tho' I will own I may exceed in the degrees of them.

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You know, I don't doubt, that my pappa was a great companion of *Lyfander's*, in his most expensive diversions, as *Chloe* was with *Flora*; and tho' I never mentioned it before to any but *Silvia*, who could not be kept ignorant of the distinction that was made at our house, this was the ground of it. For as my dear mamma, by the blessing of God, has been successful in some measure, in her attempts to raise my thoughts above the vanities of childhood and youth to things of a far more exalted nature; and in which I am infinitely more concern'd; my pappa soon brought *Chloe* to despise her instruction, and gladly fall in with all his schemes for pleasure. Often will he take her by the hand and say, Come, my dear, we'll go spend the evening at such a place at cards, or go to such an entertainment, and leave your pious mamma and *Amasia* to their devotions.

*Orin.* I am astonish'd! I always thought *Amander* bore a good character. I know I have indeed heard my pappa say he thought 'twas pity he was so much with *Lyfander*.

*Amasf.* I believe he never was guilty of *Lyfander's* excesses, but has to be sure followed his example so far as to waste his substance, impair his health, and take him entirely off from those pursuits which are most worthy of the man, and much more of the christian. And the grief this is to my mamma, as well as to myself, you, who are a stranger to this kind of trouble, can but faintly guess.

*Orin.*



FAMILIAR DIALOGUES. 45

*Orin.* I am sorry to hear this indeed ! but would not have you distress yourself with fears of what may never happen, but still repose your trust in that God whom you have chosen for your portion, firmly believing he will be your stay and succour in every day of distress. Can you think of *Silvia*, and fear ?

*Amas.* But alas ! I am not likely to go through such scenes with her calmness and resignation !

*Orin.* What should hinder ? We never took *Silvia* to be one of the stoutest courage ; and I well know she'll not be offended at my saying, 'tis a strength superior to her own that has borne her up ; and consolations no less than divine that have so refresh'd her spirits, as to cause her to sit more calm and chearful in the midst of this dreadful wreck, than spectators can be, who only view the storm at a distance. And have not you and I my dear *Amasia*, the same all-powerful and gracious arm for our support, and the same streams of divine consolations to repair to, should our time of trial come ; and we have each of us a tender and pious mamma, which poor *Silvia* has not.

*Amas.* This is all very true. I must with shame, own my distrustful imagination hurries me on too fast, to consider these things in a proper light. We should not be left to the wide world like *Silvia*, were our pappas dead, and all we had gone.

*Orin.* But were we stript of our all below, whilst we can look up to God as our Father,  
we

we should not esteem ourselves destitute; his penetrating eye can find a way for our succour; and his kind and powerful providence, by most unthought of means, provide for us. And (though this is as yet kept private) I assure you I have the pleasure of seeing the steps that are taking in *Silvia's* favour.

*Amas.* It shall be as secret as if only in your own breast. Pray let me hear the particulars.

*Orind.* I slept last night to see her. She met me at the parlour-door, with a serene countenance; but our first salutation was too moving not to bring some tears into her eyes, as it did floods into mine. When she saw me too full to speak, she recover'd herself and thus address'd me. My dear *Orinda*, you see here your poor *Silvia*, an orphan, and stript of all that could recommend her to the eye of the world or pretended friends; but I perswade myself I shall still possess the same share in your affection; as I hope my mind has sustain'd no damage, nay rather that some of the soil and dust it had contracted is brush'd off by these heavy and repeated strokes. And as it was my temper and views of things, you always said you loved your *Silvia* for, I doubt not but you will now shew the sincerity of your professions! After giving her the warmest assurances of my regard I could find words to express, I told her I questioned not but that God, to whom she in so remarkable a manner submitted, would  
some

## FAMILIAR DIALOGUES. 47

some way make base his arm for her relief. She replied, I doubt it not; and as to what way it shall be, am not at all solicitous; there being no station or employment in life too mean for me to stoop to, with some composure, if providence lead me into it: 'tis my heavenly Father who hath for so many years, exalted me beyond great numbers round about me, that hath seen meet now to cast me down, and lay me level with the lowest; and sure I ought to subscribe to his wisdom and goodness herein, as well as his power, though I may not see the reasons of this procedure.

*Amas.* But what, will her uncle Sir *John* take no care of them? I know he is very brutish.

*Orin.* I mentioned him to her; to which she replied, *Evander* was so kind as to go over as soon as he knew how affairs were; but he only gave him the hearing, shewing no concern either for his brother's death, or for the poor orphans. So that, said she, I see nothing likely to be my lot but servitude, which I hope I shall chearfully submit to, if it may but please God to appoint my station in a sober family. This is at present my greatest care for myself. I replied, I hoped a kind Providence would appear for her in a way more suitable to her birth and education. She thank'd me for my good wishes, and we parted; I returning with a heavy heart.

*Amas.* I thought you were going to tell me somewhat agreeable, but this is still all sad.

*Orin.*

48 FAMILIAR DIALOGUES.

*Orin.* No,, not all sad ; I think her deportment is matter of great joy to her friends, who see or hear of it.

*Amas.* That's true ; but I mean as to her present circumstances.

*Orin.* I was going to tell you, that when I came home, I with many tears related this conversation to my pappa and mamma, who were not much less affected than I ; but my pappa said, Come, my dear, chear up, and do not thus distress yourself ; for I am firmly perswaded such shining merit as *Silvia's* will not go wholly unrewarded in this world ; I doubt not but you'll soon hear better news than that she is become a common servant : I'll go to morrow morning to Sir *John*, and if he has not a heart of rock I hope to melt him.

*Amas.* This was very kind ; and I believe your pappa could do as much as any body with him. How did he succeed ?

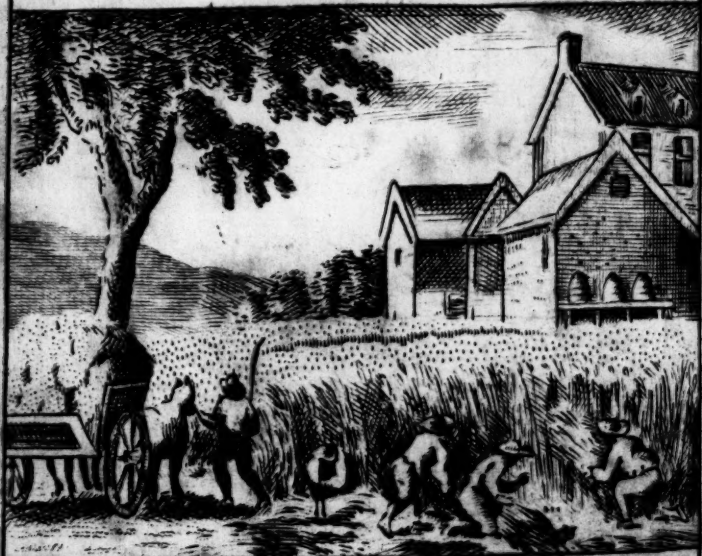
*Orin.* He pleaded their cause very hard ; but Sir *John* said, As for *Silvia*, she was too godly to come into his house ; he should be afraid she would put some of her religious notions into his childrens heads, and make them as precise as herself ; and for *Flora*, his brother had brought her up too extravagantly for him to have any thing to do with her ; so that they must e'en do as they could. My pappa then pleaded, that he would at least do somewhat for their present supply, till some way could be thought of. On this he said, urge me no farther on *Silvia's* behalf ; she shall never have a farthing from me ; she is old enough







*The Story of the good Samaritan.*  
Luke. Ch: X. page 120



*On Redeeming Time.*

enough to go out, and service is the fittest thing for her. But as for *Flora*, I will pay for her board one year, if you can find any person that will take her at a low rate; and by that time perhaps her pride may be abated, and then I should like the girl well enough in our house. On this my pappa proposed Mrs. ——'s as a proper place, to which she is to go.

*Amas.* Well, I am glad *Flora* is at present provided for, and in such a way, which may be the happy means of bringing her to some reflection; for this manner of life will, I am sure, be a far greater mortification to her, than *Silvia*'s going to service will be to her; though I should be grieved to see that.

*Orin.* I hope you never will: for, after my pappa had given me this account, I burst out a-crying, and said, then here's nothing can be done for my dear *Silvia*! Yes, replied he; come, wipe your eyes and clear up, I have been contriving both for your sake and her's: How would you like to have her to wait on you? You know we want one, and that would be better than a common servant's place. I was at a great loss what to reply.

*Amas.* I wonder at you! Why, don't you approve of that? I am sure I wish I had the offer.

*Orin.* As I knew mine was to go, it was one of the first thoughts that occur'd to my mind, and, if I had had an opportunity, should have begg'd it as a favour; but when I considered of it, I was as much against it.

F

*Amas.*

## 50 FAMILIAR DIALOGUES.

*Amas.* Why, what objection can there be?

*Orin.* I, after a pause, told my pappas, I thought myself much obliged to him for his proposal, which I was very sensible he made out of a kind regard to us both; but that I must own, it would give me a continual uneasiness to have one that I had always look'd upon as my superior, plac'd in such a station under me; and I should be in constant pain, lest any thing in my behaviour should grieve her. Well, my dear, answered my pappas, I am very glad to see in you such a foundation laid for sincere and lasting friendship, and the just notions you form of these things. I only propos'd it to hear what you would say, being entirely of your mind, as is also your mamma. But we imagine that you would not be displeased, if instead of a servant you had a companion; and as this will entirely remove your objection, I am perswaded *Silvia's* good sense, piety, and gratitude will influence her to behave so as to give you no uneasiness another way. What say you to this, my dear? I immediately replied, this was an offer I should with the greatest thankfulness accept. I was going on in my acknowledgments, when he was sent for out. But I dare say 'tis a thing agreed on.

*Amas.* This is good news indeed; *Silvia* on such terms will be far happier in your house than ever she was in her own, on many accounts. Well, I shall return much easier in my mind than I came. And I hope such  
in-

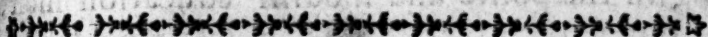


# FAMILIAR DIALOGUES. 51

instructions, and such an example, will be the happy means of keeping me for the future from giving way to such distrustful thoughts.

*Orin.* I hope they will, dear *Amasia*; I thank you for this visit, and shall soon return it.

*Amasf.* The sooner the more agreeable.



## DIALOGUE VII.

*Between Charlotte, and Olivia, on brotherly Love.*

*Char.* I Was in great expectation of seeing you yesterday, *Olivia*.

*Oliv.* As I was out the day before, I was obliged to sit close to finish some work that was in haste: else I should not have deferred my visit; for I long to tell you of my tour.

*Char.* What, were you out of town!

*Oliv.* Yes, my pappà, mamma, and I, set out early in the morning and walk'd to——, where we breakfasted, and then went on to *Cleander's*, where we spent the rest of the day; and had I imagined the walk half so pleasant as it was, or the entertainment so agreeable, I should have asked you to have gone with us, for I wished for you there.

*Char.* I love such a walk and to be in country-houses very much, and should have

## 52 FAMILIAR DIALOGUES.

liked to have gone, only that would have brought me under an obligation of forming an acquaintance with *Daphne*, which I am not fond of, and therefore 'tis better as it is.

I suppose you must ask her to return your visit.

*Oliv.* Yes, to be sure I did, and believe I shall be far from repenting it on my account: for I assure you, *Charlotte*, what I found wanting in the polite and modish education most of our acquaintance have had, was abundantly made up by the unaffected freedom and sweetness of her behaviour, and that good sense and piety with which her conversation was adorn'd; so that I never spent a pleasanter afternoon in my life.

*Char.* Pray then give me some of the particulars, for you seem very full of it.

*Oliv.* After dinner, *Daphne* and her brother *Clio* asked me to take a walk; when we had been round the garden, which was large and neat, we went into the orchard, and *Daphne* said, Pray, *Clio*, let us show *Olivia* our arbor, because, though it be but homely, 'tis a sort of curiosity. This said, we made up to a great tree, where by a sort of natural steps we ascended, till we came to a part where the main arms of it were bent into pretty convenient seats for three or four persons, whilst some of the higher and smaller served for shelves to lay books on. I was charmed with a scene so new and agreeable, the boughs over us forming a sufficient shade, and yet leaving us a most delightful prospect

of

FAMILIAR DIALOGUES. 53

of the adjacent country, which at this height we saw to advantage.

*Char.* That must be very pretty; I begin to wish I had been with you.

*Oliv.* I assure you I have not yet told you of my best entertainment there.

*Char.* No! What, have they a closet? Pray what rarities did they give you?

*Oliv.* O my dear, 'twas a feast for my mind, which you know I prefer to the pleasing my taste. Upon my looking into two books that lay there, *Daphne* ask'd me if I loved poetry; I told her, yes, extremely well; then, said she, *Clio* will read you some I believe you will like; on which he pull'd out a pocket-book, and read two copies sent him lately in letters; one was on the pleasures of a retired life, written he said by a friend, who had spent many a delightful hour with them in that retreat. I thought them exceeding pretty. And the other, tho' more melancholy, I was quite charm'd with. They were on the sudden death of a very ingenious and pious young gentleman that *Clio* knew, and made by one of his intimate acquaintance.

*Char.* I wish I had heard them.

*Oliv.* You shall soon see them; for I express'd so much pleasure in hearing them, that *Clio* very obligingly offer'd to write them out for me. When we had pass'd about an hour there, in very agreeable conversation, we went in, and *Daphne* took me up to her closet, where was a very curious collection of books, which I found by her discourse had

## 54 FAMILIAR DIALOGUES.

not stood there only for show, but had most of them been well used. Here we sat some time, and upon my saying I thought she lived very pleasantly, she replied smiling, I believe most of you young ladies would be of a different mind, to be cloister'd up like nuns at such a distance from town; and go thither no oftner than we do.

*Char.* She was smart enough upon you there, *Olivia*: for we should soon be sick of such a dull life, I believe; I know I should for one.

*Oliv.* I can't tell what you might be; but I am perswaded, I should never complain of her retirement joined with her pleasures. She own'd that perhaps even use would not render it so to her, were it not for the society of *Clio*; tis his affectionate behaviour, and improving delightful conversation, said she, that fills up many of these seemingly dull hours, with a pleasure that fully makes up my want of other company: I replied, I could easily believe her by the observations I had made in this little time, there appearing in their behaviour not only the affection suitable to the relation, but the freedom and intimacy of friends. You are in the right, said she: our brotherly love, which was always stronger to each other than is seen in many families, has been for years past greatly increased and cemented, by the still more endearing bonds of christian friendship. We have, ever since we were brought to any serious reflection, with the utmost openness unbosom'd all our  
fears



## FAMILIAR DIALOGUES. 33

fears and scruples, all our hopes and joys to each other, which, as it hath been of mutual service for our increase in knowledge and piety, so hath it raised our affection to a degree of ardour, and exalted and refined it, beyond what those can imagine who have never joined the endearing titles of brother and friend in one name. We have a large stock of knowledge to repair to in our libraries, and are daily, I hope, adding out of them to the small furniture of our minds; and we have a pretty good acquaintance, who, tho' we can but seldom meet, are so good as to give us frequent entertainment by their agreeable letters. And now, *Charlotte*, I think you won't wonder I was pleased with my visit.

*Char.* No, nor at your wanting so much to inform me of it neither. I thank you for your reproof. I am sure you have struck me home.

*Oliv.* What do you mean, *Charlotte*? I am sure I had no thought of offending you, in any thing I have said.

*Char.* No, I don't take it in that light indeed; but you do not think me so dull of apprehension as not to see your design, for then you would have wholly lost your labour. You have drawn a very bright contrast to the dark shades in our house, and I have not fail'd putting them together as you went along.

*Oliv.* Upon my word I had no such view. I knew not that *Silvander* and you were want-  
ing

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ing, either in affection or the proper ways of expressing it.

*Char.* Have you ever seen, or heard of, any thing like what I have been relating?

*Oliv.* No, indeed; but you know *Silvander* is not with us. And tho' I have not heard you say much about him, I assure you I never made one reflection upon it; my only view herein was to give you part of the pleasure I had been enjoying myself.

*Char.* Then I must say, that God himself has by you, in a very remarkable way, given me this just and most cutting reproof; had you intended it as such, the handsome manner in which it was done, would have rendered my taking it ill quite inexcusable: but that you should be thus the innocent conveyer of it to me, seems to give it a more awful and impressive force on my mind. I have reason with shame to own, that *Silvander* and I are the reverse of these shining characters, and that through my sin and folly.

*Oliv.* Nay, now, I dare say, you carry your self-accusation too far; for if this is the case with you, no doubt but *Silvander* has his share of the blame. I never took you to be so ill-natur'd as to be capable of deserving such a load as the whole would be, and in all such cases there are generally faults on both sides.

*Char.* There may be generally so: but I must with grief say, mine is an exception. *Silvander* is of a sweet temper, and has been very

very fond of me, 'till I have by my carriage wean'd his affections; in a word, he was capable in all respects of being a *Clio*, had I with all my superior advantages been but a *Daphne*.

*Oliv.* 'Tis but seldom, I own, that persons are too severe in censuring themselves; but I am persuaded you are now guilty of that fault.

*Char.* Oh! no, *Olivia*, I have no fear of erring on that hand. I pray God I may be enabled to do this part of my work but so effectually as to search out and labour to cleanse that fountain of my own corrupt heart, from whence I plainly see these bitter streams flow! For I am now fully convinced of what my mamma has often told me, that there is a natural discontent and haughtiness in my temper, which I ought to have prayed and striven against; whereas, alas! I have been deaf to these remonstrances, and by indulging, greatly strengthened these vicious dispositions of my nature. As I was but a year younger than my brother, I could not bear to think he should in any respect have the preference; this created continual jars when we were little, and my pappa and mamma, for the most part, taking his side in all our petty-debates (as no doubt they saw good reason to do) I took it into my head to imagine 'twas because he was loved best, from whence arose an alienation of affection both from my parents and him, whom I look'd upon as the favourite, which, as we have  
grown

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grown up, has discovered itself in a sullen shyness and reserve, rather than wrangling disputes; as we seldom indeed have much conversation together.

*Oliv.* If you have done yourself justice, I can't be guilty of so much flattery as to applaud your conduct, indeed, *Charlotte*. But if *Silvander* be what you have represented him, as you are now sensible of your mistake, 'tis not too late to have the case altered, and that with ease.

*Char.* With ease on his side, I dare say it might. But how shall I bring this proud and stubborn heart of mine, to force a confession to him of my error? Nor will it be an easy task to alter the reserv'd deportment of a stranger, for the free and affectionate behaviour of a sister. What shall I do in this case?

*Oliv.* Keep but upon your mind your present views of things, and pray earnestly to God to fix and strengthen your pious resolutions, and in dependance on his assistance make the attempt, and I doubt not of your success.





## DIALOGUE VIII.

BETWEEN the SAME.

The Subject pursued.

*Oliv.* **I** Am very glad to see you, for you have been much on my thoughts since we were last together.

*Char.* I dare say, I have not been behind-hand with you in that respect.

*Oliv.* I have longed to know how you have proceeded, and what your success has been.

*Char.* I was, after you left me, greatly oppressed indeed; the guilt and folly of my past conduct appear'd in such a light, as fill'd me with amazement and distress: but after I had retir'd, and given vent to my grief by a free confession of my sin, and earnest prayers for pardon, with most sincere desires after those assistances of divine grace, by which I may be enabled to gain some conquest over this my prevailing sin, as I have now found it to be; I perceived some hope arise in my breast, though I continued very thoughtful and dejected, which was observed by the house, and they

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they imagined at first I was not well; but when I assur'd my mamma I was, she seem'd to take no farther notice. My great perplexity lay in speaking to *Silvander*; for as I told you we were little together, 'twas almost as difficult to find an opportunity, as to perform the work when I had one; and I could not be easy till I had taken some steps in what now I thought so much my duty and interest. But the third day, after dinner, we were I think providentially left alone some time; which was unusual.

*Oliv.* Providence often appears for our assistance, when we are really desirous to put in execution our good purposes.

*Char.* You will see it here plainly, before I have done. *Silvander*, as soon as the room was clear, came and set himself down by me, and prevented my beginning, which I was going to attempt, by taking me by the hand, and in a most sweet and engaging manner thus address'd me. Pray, *Charlotte*, what is it that is the matter with you? I am sure you are very uneasy: there is a visible grief in your countenance; if you will let me know the occasion, I assure you I will do all that lies in my power to remove it. This treatment, so different from what I was convinced I deserved at his hands, before any overtures made on my side, melted me into tears, and stopp'd my speech. He continued pressing me to tell him, and promising secrecy, with whatever he could think of to persuade me to speak: adding, I can't bear to see you in this distress, for  
tho

tho' you have not the affection of a sister for me, I have had that of a brother for you. Your carriage has indeed greatly damp't it, but the seeing you thus has blown up the flame afresh; and if I can remove your trouble by any means, speak and 'tis done. To see my guilt a second time placed before my view in so artless and friendly a way, subdued all the remains of pride and reserve; and as soon as I could speak for crying, I said, I only wish'd I had always lov'd you, as I feel I now do; then had we both lived happy, and I had not known my present grief. He appear'd astonish'd at the speech, and told me he did not understand what I meant; he hoped he had not been the occasion of it. I replied, my concern I have brought on myself, by a consciousness of my unsuitable behaviour to you; but you are the only person that can remove it, by an assurance of your forgiving my past conduct, which I hope I am too fully convinced of the evil of, ever to give you any reason for the like complaints. He immediately took me in his arms, and in the tenderest manner said, My dear sister, speak not of the past, 'tis all with me as if it had never been; the pleasure of your future love and friendship will give me a joy I want words to express. I was going to make a reply, when he was call'd out, and I retired to vent myself in mingled tears of grief and joy; joy for this happy reconciliation, and grief that I should be guilty of such disingenuous behaviour towards so kind, so deserving a relation.

G

Oliv.

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*Oliv.* His deportment on the occasion was very engaging indeed ; and as you say, Providence made the path of duty you had to walk in, remarkably plain and easy. Have you had any particular conversation since ?

*Char.* Yes ; that same evening as I was walking in the garden, and contriving how I should act in the best manner to discover the sincerity of my profession, he came to me, and bringing a *Milton's Paradise Lost*, told me, as he knew I lik'd it, he desir'd I would accept of it in remembrance of this happy day. I having in my pocket a book of poems I had lately bought, took it out and begg'd he would likewise accept of that, as I trusted these might be look'd upon by us to the end of life, as tokens of a true and lasting affection, and as standing-witnesses of that bond of friendship into which we mutually entered. To which he replied, they shall on my part, dear *Charlotte*, and I doubt not on your's also. My mamma coming into the garden, prevented any farther particular discourse that night ; but yesterday and to-day we have had a great deal of free, and I hope profitable conversation.

*Oliv.* I am heartily glad to hear this, and doubt not but you will find both pleasure and advantage in such a course, as the cultivating brotherly love is one of those commands, in the keeping of which there is a great, present reward.

*Char.* I have found it so already, enjoying that peace and satisfaction in my own breast, to which before I was an utter stranger.

*Oliv.*



## FAMILIAR DIALOGUES 63

*Oliv.* And, no doubt but it will give a very great pleasure to your dear parents to see you thus dwell together in love and unity, which is a consideration that may give you much satisfaction.

*Char.* 'Tis very true, and I have had a taste of it already; for this morning my mamma told me, she had with great delight observ'd the alteration, and that I could scarce conceive what an addition it would make to the happiness of her life, to see us live in that love and harmony we now expressed. And added, I hope, my dear, you yourself find so much pleasure from it as will be an inducement to you to persevere. I replied, I did so; that it was no small concern to me to reflect on the uneasiness I had occasioned her by my temper and behaviour; but as I hoped I had seen both the sin and the folly of it, and begg'd pardon of God for it, I doubted not I should obtain her's, and also a continuance of those kind instructions which I had too much disregarded, but which for the future I hoped I should gladly attend to. She embraced me with tears of joy, and said, My dear, you have from me as full and free forgiveness as I trust we shall both find with heaven for our manifold offences; and it gives me the highest satisfaction to perceive this change has proceeded from a conviction of the evil of a contrary behaviour, which seems the surest ground to hope that it will be lasting. She was going to proceed, when my pappas coming in put an end to the discourse.

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*Oliv.* You have the happiness of a very prudent, pious, and tender mamma, as well as I; and I hope we shall both of us learn to prize and improve this mercy more than we have done, and better consider the duties it obliges us to.

*Char.* You have no need to put yourself in, I am sure; had I but perform'd mine as you have done, it would have been happy for me.

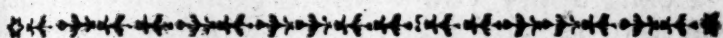
*Oliv.* I have not had the trial how I should have behaved in the case we have been upon, having neither brother nor sister; but I am more sensible than I ever was before, that I have been often defective in my duty as a child, trespassing too much on my parents great indulgence.

*Char.* When your seasonable story first opened my eyes to see these my gross defects, I was greatly surprized that I should remain so long insensible in a case where my duty is so plainly stated in the word of God, and so often inculcated to me by my instructors; but now I find it was my own natural temper that, being indulged by me, led me, or rather hurried me, into the paths of pride and contention: for I am convinced the wise man's observation is true, That only by pride cometh contention. And surely it could be nothing but the most shameful inconsideration, that could make me blind to it so long.

*Oliv.* Well, my dear, I hope that as both of us do sincerely desire to know and do our duty, we shall for the future be more diligent  
in

## FAMILIAR DIALOGUES. 65

in our search into the Scriptures, that we may there see what it is the Lord our God requires of us, and be more careful to perform what we thus know to be our duty; applying daily with earnestness to God, for that grace whereby we may be enabled to subdue and root out whatever we find amiss in our tempers, which, we see, have so great and fatal an influence on our practice.



### DIALOGUE IX.

*Between MELISSA and CELIA.*

#### On CHARITY.

*Mel.* **I** Am much rejoiced to see you enter this house once again, which I feared you had forsaken.

*Cel.* No, my dear, *Melissa* has not been forgotten, tho' I could not come; we had so much work to do that I have been obliged to delay my usual visits: But now I hope to give myself the pleasure very soon, tho' I cannot just now.

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*Mel.* What do you mean? Can't you stay this afternoon?

*Cel.* No, my dear; I only come to you on business, tho' I believe you will scarce guess what: I have undertaken a trade which is to me wholly new.

*Mel.* Nay, you puzzle me now indeed; for I can't think what you can mean.

*Cel.* I am going a begging, and I come to begin with you.

*Mel.* A begging! Pray what is it for? If I can supply you without going any farther, I shall be glad, as then I may hope to keep you the afternoon.

*Cel.* No, *Melissa*, I am far from expecting a full supply from you; but your ready offer promises a good beginning, 'tis money I want.

*Mel.* Money! you jest. I really thought you had been in earnest, and wanted some shade to finish your screen, or some such thing; but for money, I wish I had as much as you.

*Cel.* No, I assure you I am in earnest. 'Tis not indeed for myself. I bless God, we are both so highly distinguished by a kind Providence, that we are so far from wanting to ask charity, as to be able to contribute to those that do. You must have heard of poor Mrs. ——'s great affliction, who has lost, with her husband, all her support for herself and three helpless babes.

*Mel.* I heard he was dead, but I thought she had carried on the business.

*Cel.*



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*Cel.* Have you not heard that her goods were seiz'd, and her merciless landlord and creditors have stript her of every thing, and every penny she had! 'Tis for her I am going about, to see what I can pick up.

*Mel.* I did not hear it. Her case, poor woman, is bad to be sure: But are you really going to beg for her? I think, if you are, your new trade, as you call'd it, is a very strange one.

*Cel.* Yes, I really am, and am surpriz'd to hear you call it a strange employment, to assist the widow and fatherless in so afflicted and helpless a condition; unless you mean by the expression that it is not very common, which I own is but too true; and that as much surprizes me, when I consider how frequently, and in what strong terms, charity is recommended in Scripture, and this branch of it in particular.

*Mel.* I don't object against being charitable, 'tis to be sure a very good thing; but I don't at all admire your going a begging, as you call it. What should you do that for?

*Cel.* Nay, *Melissa*, you might, I think, easily guess for what. 'Tis that I may get a little sum of money for the present subsistence of this desolate widow and her helpless orphans. You know it is a common saying, that a great many may with ease help one, whereas one can't well help a great many. 'Tis but little I can do towards it, tho' I assure you, I don't do it to spare my own purse.

*Mel.*

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*Mel.* But sure she may get into some way. She must not expect that, because she was not brought up to get her living, other people must keep her and hers. She should try to bring her mind to her condition, though it may be hard to do; but I think of the two I should rather work hard than be kept on charity.

*Cel.* I doubt not she will be as ready to fall in with any way of livelihood, that can be found out for her, as any body can be to propose it. But pray, my dear, what do you imagine she can yet do, under the pressing weight of such a trial, with three infants, the eldest of which is but four years old, and she within a month of her time?

*Mel.* I did not think of that; she can't do much at present to be sure. But then, why does not the parish help her?

*Cel.* If you would give yourself leave to reflect, sure, my dear, it would grieve you to think that a person of such a family, equally noted for substance and piety, should be reduced to that last necessity. Tho' I fear that must be the case soon. However I hope you'll not be against giving me something towards her immediate supply.

*Mel.* Indeed I can't. My pappa allows me so small a matter for spending-money, that I have uses enough for what I have. You have more I don't question, else you could not be so bountiful in your charities as I have heard you are. I have but—

*Cel.*

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*Cel.* And I have but—— I thought my income was the least of the two; but if I had much less, I should think it my duty to dispose of a little of it in that way, without which I could expect no blessing on the rest. And as you must know 'tis commanded by God, I hope for all this talk you dare not wholly neglect it.

*Mel.* I believe 'tis the duty of some people that are rich, and have a great deal at their own disposal; but indeed I never thought it mine.

*Cel.* I am sorry to hear this. Pray did you ever read any thing in the commands relating to charity, that restrain them to those who are rich, or heads of families?

*Mel.* No, I can't say I did; but then it must be the duty of those only who have it to give, which I have not.

*Cel.* O my dear, pray don't speak such a word, lest it should please God by some awful providence to give you occasion to say it. You know you have more than I.

*Mel.* Well, but I can't think how you manage to find any money for such uses; I am sure I can't.

*Cel.* I find it no difficult task at all. When my pappa gives me my quarter's money I put what I think proper for that purpose by itself. So that when there is a call, I have my poor's box to repair to; and if it be a case that I think requires more than that will furnish me with, I take from what I call my  
own;

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own, to increase it. And contrive to lay out so much the less that quarter.

*Mel.* But I know nothing I am extravagant in, and yet, were it not for the presents my grand-pappa and aunt are often making me, I could not go much above half through my quarters. What can I spare out of—? Can you tell me, *Celia*?

*Cel.* As you have put the question to me, I hope, *Melissa*, you will not be offended if I answer you freely. Do you imagine there is a necessity for your laying out so much on fruit, sweetmeats, and other things, purely to please your taste? I am satisfied by what I have heard you say, I don't spend a quarter so much as you that way, and I yet save a great deal more out of the small articles of dress that our money is allotted to procure. You know, my dear, you have often blamed me for not buying such as you did; and now I will own to you, that the chief reason was because, had I gone to the price, my stock would not have held out, and therefore I contented myself with what came cheaper.

*Mel.* But to act thus is such a course of self-denial as would take away all the comfort of my life: for what have I my money for, but that I may in these things please myself? If I don't, I am worse than if I had none.

*Cel.* Sure, my dear, you don't consider what you say!

*Mel.* Why? What harm is there in it?

*Cel.*



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*Cel.* What harm ! Certainly if you reflect you will soon see. Is it not as much as to say you are worse for having it in your power, by doing good to others, to obey the command of God ! which you ought to be very thankful for ? And as for the self-denial you speak of, it will scarce deserve the name, except it be to those who place their chief happiness in gratifying their fancies, and sensual appetites ; which I hope is not our character. For my own part, I profess, this practice, instead of being any exercise of self-denial to me, has rather seem'd to be the effect of self-love ; as it would give me the greatest uneasiness to hear of a distress'd case, and do nothing towards procuring it relief. And the pleasure I feel, to think that God has given me any ability to help the fatherless, and sometimes cause the widow's heart to sing for joy is far greater than could have been excited by any gratification of my senses. Don't you remember lately, how you would have persuaded me to buy such a fan as your's, and told me mine was not fit for me to wear ?

*Mel.* Yes, I do. What I suppose you had given away all your money ; had you not ?

*Cel.* No, my dear, I had more than would have purchas'd it about me ; but I had that day heard of a good woman that was sick and in want of necessaries, and as I had but little left in my poor's box, I determin'd to give her that money, which I did before I went home ;

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home ; and her distress appear'd so great and my relief so very seasonable, that 'tis with ten times more pleasure I take my old fan into my hand, than I could have done the other. And now, what think you, *Melissa*, of the matter ?

*Mel.* I think I have, as you say, done wrong in spending all upon myself, and will try if I can contrive to save something ; but yet, to me, abridging one's self for the sake of others, as you do, appears a work of supererogation, which we are no ways called to.

*Cel.* You know I am as far from desiring to appear peculiar as any body. I have no notion that persons are to go quite beneath the rank Providence has placed them in, that they may be the more charitable ; this I think an error, and looks too much as if indeed they did it to be applauded of men, and as you say, thought it would be very great merit in the sight of God. All I plead for, as all I practise is this : not to go to the utmost extent that my whole sum would allow me, either as to richness in dress, or expence in pleasing my taste ; that by such savings I may have it in my power to give a bit of bread to a starving family, or a garment to clothe an almost naked person. But 'tis more than time I was gone : we'll talk this matter over at large another day, if you desire it. Pray be so good as to give me my alms and dismiss me.

*Mel.*

FAMILIAR DIALOGUES. 33

*Mel.* Indeed I can't now, for my quarter is almost up, and I have very little left to buy what I must have for myself.

*Cel.* Nay, pray don't let me meet with a baulk in my first attempt; I can't think but you can better delay some of your purchases, than a poor widow, by this time in want of relief for herself and three pretty babes. 'Tis better to wait for some superfluities, than to let them wait for necessaries.

*Mel.* Well, *Celia*, you talk of beginning, but one would think (as we say) you were used to your trade; you have learnt it very well I am sure, for you are a most importunate beggar, that I see, will take no denial. Come, here's a shilling, if you'll accept of it.

*Cel.* Yes, and thank you too. Beggars must not, you know, be choosers.

*Mel.* Pray call as you come back, and tell me your success.

*Cel.* I will if I have time; but if I spend as much in pleading with every one as I have done with you, I am sure I shan't.

H

DIA-



## DIALOGUE X.

BETWEEN the SAME.

*Mel.* SO, *Celia*, how well you call'd that night!

*Cel.* Indeed I could not, and I stept out now only to let you see that I had not been a strolling till I had lost myself. I finish'd late last night my begging employment, and so have been obliged to keep in to-day to make an end of something that was wanted.

*Mel.* Then I suppose you found some a backward as I, that made you so long.

*Cel.* No, I'll assure you that was not the reason, for I met with very unexpected success: There was one, indeed, that did not seem a very chearful giver; but I had no denial any where.

*Mel.* Pray let me have the account of your progress, and how you succeeded, for I have had many thoughts on this subject since I saw you.

*Cel.* I went from hence to *Amasia*, who as soon as I had told my errand, gave me half a crown, saying she was sorry she could do no more, her pocket being but low at present.

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there having been lately a most afflicting case amongst her acquaintance, which had almost drain'd her. Tho' said she, I did as you do, and should have applied to you, had you been at home. But I will go with you to a lady hard by, if you please, where I am persuaded you will speed better. I replied, I should thankfully accept her offer, if she would be so good as to speak for me; but as I was a beginner, I did not know how to get courage enough to speak to strangers; to which she consenting, we went.

*Mel.* I wonder to whom she could carry you, unless it were to *Sophira*.

*Cel.* The very same.

*Mel.* I knew *Amasia* was great with her. She is a very rich old maid; and I think such folks have nothing else to do with their money.

*Cel.* She has uses for her's, I'll assure you, equal to those who have a family of their own; having a reduc'd relation, a widow gentlewoman, whom she keeps as a companion with her, and maintains her four children in a handsome manner at school. But she does a great deal of good besides, in acts of common charity.

*Mel.* Well, how did you succeed?

*Cel.* *Amasia* told her that some, she was sensible, would account her very impertinent, to bring them another petitioner so soon after having been herself on the same errand. But, added she, the encouragement I then received, and the assurance you gave me of the plea-

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sure you took in seeing me engaged in such a work, gives me reason to believe I have committed no offence in bringing my friend who is following my example. After giving her a short account of the case, she replied with a smile, you well know, *Amasia*, on such an account you cannot be more bold than welcome. And I thank you for giving me an opportunity of encouraging the young lady in so good a work. *Sophira* then taking out her purse, and turning to me, gave me a guinea, saying, I heartily wish you such success as may animate you to fresh engagements of a like nature; and you shall at any time be welcome to my purse. You may be sure I return'd my thanks for such a bounty, and such treatment, in the best manner I was able.

*Mel.* She acted most generously indeed.

*Cel.* Flush'd with this success, I went forward, and as I pass'd by the door, called on *Lucy*, telling her I came only for the widow's mite, which I knew she was always ready to cast into the treasury on such occasions. She presently gave me half a crown, which I was loth to take, it being more, I told her, than I thought she could afford. But she replied, that place of scripture is so deeply impress'd on my mind, and has been so remarkably fulfill'd to me, 'He that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and that which he hath given he will repay him again,' that I should be guilty of the greatest folly and ingratitude.

if I did not do to the utmost of my small ability.

*Mel.* Why, I thought *Lucy*, was in low circumstances, and took in work to help to maintain herself.

*Cel.* 'Tis true; that made me unwilling to take so much.

So much! Could it be her duty to give any thing? For tho' I am now fully convinced of my own fault, I can't see how any thing can be expected from those that have not enough for themselves.

*Cel.* Pray what can you say then of the widow that gave her all? You must, sure, have blamed her conduct had you stood by; and yet our blessed Saviour, who was certainly a proper judge, seems to commend her for it. And as to her taking in work, that certainly can be no objection against a person's doing somewhat for the relief of those that are in great distress; when the apostle exhorts those that had stolen, to steal no more; but rather to labour, working with their hands in some good and laudable employment, that they might not only provide for themselves in a lawful way, but have also to give to those that were in need. You remember these instances don't you?

*Mel.* Yes, I do. But I can't say I ever applied them to such a case, tho' I must own they seem adapted to it. But pray go on with your progress.

*Cel.* As I took my acquaintance all in my way, the next I call'd on was *Delia*; who,  
I sup-

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I suppose, you know is often at our house ; and I imagined she might get her uncle or aunt to give her something for me. As I found there was company, I sent for her out, and told her my story ; she said she would go and whisper her uncle, and she was sure he would give her something : but she immediately came back and desired me to walk into the parlour, where were two ladies and an old gentleman besides themselves. When I was seated, Mr — said, *Delia* has been telling me in my ear some dismal story, but I could not make it out ; pray let us have the account from yourself. I was much dash'd, as strangers were by ; however I told him as well as I could, and said I hoped he would excuse my calling on *Delia*, that I was encouraged by what I had heard her say of his readiness to give her on such occasions. Mr. — replied, indeed, *Celia*, I should not have excused you, had you pass'd by my door ; for I am rejoiced that my *Delia*, by your goodness in taking such notice of her, will have in you an example of that temper I so much desire to cultivate in her. Then turning to the company, he said, Come, I hope we shall none of us discourage a young beggar, especially such a one as this lady ; for I assure you she is no common one, nor do I think this a common occasion. Nor I neither, replied the old gentleman ; and I assure you, young lady, I have not seen any thing that has given me greater delight this long time, than that such a one as you, in all the affluence



ence of worldly good, and all the prime and gaiety of youth, should, like your blessed Lord, go about doing good, ministering to the relief of the necessitous to the utmost of your ability, and in conformity to the divine Being, relieve the fatherless and widow. Then putting half a guinea into my hand, he said, I pray and hope that this labour of love will be abundantly rewarded by the Father of all mercy, and God of all grace. The rest of the company gave me a crown a-piece, and Mr. — gave *Delia* half a crown for herself. So that I got above thirty shillings there. But as tea was ready, and they insisted upon my staying, I could go no farther that evening. However, I believe you will think I made a pretty good afternoon's work; I am sure I thought so, and went home greatly rejoiced.

*Mel.* A good one indeed, considering you had such a bad beginning, and spent a great part of it to so little purpose.

*Cel.* I hope that was to as good purpose as any of the rest; for if they have been the happy means of exciting you to the practice of this neglected duty, I have been successful in my main point, which is I trust, so to employ my time as may render me some ways useful. Nor have I fail'd in this particular branch of usefulness, charity; since I hope many will hereafter find, to their joy and relief, the good effects of this conviction; neither did I wholly fail as to my present design.

*Mel.*

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*Mel.* You may well put in wholly indeed. I am asham'd and griev'd it should be so difficult to persuade me to what I now see is so much my duty and interest. But to make you a small amends, I have got a crown of my mamma, and here is a shilling more for myself. I hope I shall manage so as to be better stock'd against another time.

*Cel.* You are very good now, *Melissa*; pray return my thanks.

*Mel.* But you have not told me your last day's walk and success.

*Cel.* No, but I'll go on. As it was in my way, I call'd first on *Phillis*, from whom I expected a small matter, as I knew her will ready beyond the extent of her ability, on all such occasions. She went up and brought me down a crown, at which, when I looked surpriz'd, she said with a smile, I suppose I have made you wonder at my generosity; but I have this day received a legacy of twenty pounds from a very distant relation, and where it was not at all to be expected; and as a thank-offering to God for this most seasonable supply, I can do no less than devote some small part of it to the relief of those who are fallen yet lower than myself, and I think this as proper an object as any I am likely to find. I thank'd her very kindly, and told her I was glad to hear that a kind Providence thus appear'd to provide for her, and by its bounties give her a present reward for her readiness, according to her abilities, to assist others. O my dear *Celia*, replied she,  
'tis

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'tis little indeed that I can do this way ; but I firmly believe I am, as to this world, no loser by it. God's word is true ; and I question not, but in various appearances of his Providence in our favour, we have found that promise in particular fulfill'd to us, Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days ; as our family when in prosperity were remarkable for charity, so since the change in our circumstances we have in as remarkable a manner been pretty comfortably provided for.

*Mel.* I am glad you have told me this ; for I was yesterday thinking since there were such promises of a return even in this life, whence it came to pass that *Phillis* in particular (for I had her in my mind) should be brought so low, whose friends were so significantly charitable ; but now I see that these promises are fulfil'd to her by the wonderful appearances of providence for her ; for I know this is not the first extraordinary supply they have received.

*Cel.* No, not by a great many, through a course of long affliction. She and her widow parent have been so peculiarly the care of Providence, that it could not escape the notice of friends, and more distant spectators. Well, I went hence to *Charlotte*, who looked very coldly on me, and after a pretty many excuses and pleas of poverty she gave me a shilling.

*Mel.* Why I heard her uncle lets her, now, have the whole of her yearly income, to do  
what

what she pleases with. And can she plead poverty?

*Cel.* Yes, my dear, and would I doubt not on such occasions, had she as much again; for clothes and jewels, and expensive diversions would easily devour it all.

*Mel.* Well now I more plainly than ever see, that it is not the abundance, but the disposition of mind, that will render persons charitable.

*Cel.* 'Tis very true. But to proceed; I took my alms, tho' not very thankfully, and applied next to *Almira*, who gave me half a crown, and told me that it was the widow's mite indeed, for she had not one sixpence more: But, added she, I have a good friend to borrow of when I want, and next week I shall receive my money. And to come to a close of my tour, I finished at *Miranda's*.

*Mel.* I have heard she is a very generous young lady, and that her pappa grudges no expence to oblige her.

*Cel.* You are in the right; but as she is yet so young, not thirteen, he lets her have but a little quarterly, that he may the better know how she disposes of it; and as he never denies her any thing she can reasonably desire, she is not backward in applying to him. When I had told her my business, she said, Indeed, *Celia*, my purse is very low, but I'll go and borrow some of my pappa. I replied, perhaps it might be better for me to take what she could give me. O no, says she, 'tis all one for that; to-morrow is pay-day,  
and



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and my pappa is always willing to lend me if I come short, especially on so good an occasion as this. Her pappa coming into the parlour soon after she had been to speak to him, he said, smiling, Pray, *Miranda*, what is the sum you desire, that I may consider whether I dare trust you with it or not? She answer'd, What you please, pappa; I told you what 'twas for. Well, says he, but you know I never set the bounds of your charity; you can best tell what you are willing to give. She replied a crown, if he thought well of it. Yes, my dear, said he, and I am glad to see you are willing, out of your little stock, to give so large a part to feed the widow and fatherless. And to show you how well pleas'd I am with it, I'll not only lend you the crown you desire, but here's half a guinea more of mine for the same use: and I hope you will give it out of pity and compassion to the distressed, and with gratitude and praise to that God who might have permitted it to have been your case, instead of being able to help, feed and clothe them. I staid there pretty late, and then returned home very much delighted with the afternoon's work.

*Mel.* Upon my word you have got up a fine sum.

*Cel.* Yes, with what we gave at home, I made up above five pounds, twenty shillings of which my mamma carried her this morning, and you cannot think the rapture of joy the poor woman was in to see it, and to hear there was so much more. She knowing nothing

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thing of my design, the surprize was too great to be expressed.

*Mel.* It must be a joyful sight indeed. Well, my dear *Celia*, I hope your good instructions, example, and success, will animate me to act in another manner for the future, than I have ever yet done ; to consider that I am not born for myself alone, nor ought to live wholly to myself, but daily to think how I may be most useful to those around me.



## D I A L O G U E XI.

*Between* BELINDA and ALMIRA.

### The P E A C E - M A K E R.

*Bel.* I Came to ask you to let me have your company to *Silvia's*, this afternoon.

*Al.* I should be glad of yours any where else ; but wonder, *Belinda*, you can expect it there.

*Bel.* I knew there was a little misunderstanding between you ; but have not you got over that ?

*Al.* No, indeed, I am not such a tame fool as to dangle after those that slight me in such a manner ; 'tis far from what you call it, 'tis a real affront, that, I think, I should be very un-





*The Story of Nabals Churlishness.*

1. Sam. Ch. 25.

Vol. 2. page. 8.



*The Story of Abigails Appeasing David*

1. Sam. Ch. 25



unwise to put up with ; but I find you are too partial to her to be a proper judge.

*Bel.* I am sure my temptation to partiality lies on your side ; but I am far from desiring to assume the office of a judge ; could I arise to that of a peace-maker, tis the very top of my ambition ; and I hope you will not be angry with me for aspiring after a character on which our Saviour himself has pronounced a blessing.

*Al.* No to be sure I shan't, 'tis a very good office ; but, in my case, I see no room for the execution of it.

*Bel.* If you will pay but an equal regard to me in that character I am so ambitious of sustaining, as you did to *Letitia* when personating the direct reverse, I shall not fear succeeding.

*Al.* I never heard any ill of *Letitia* in my life ; I am sure she always carries it extremely obliging to me, and I took it very kind of her to let me know my pretended friends from my real ones. Pray what has set you against her so ?

*Bel.* I am not set against her person. God forbid I should harbour so wicked a disposition of mind ! But her character I must own I am displeased with, as being I think one of the worst. For I have said, I'll assure you, my dear, nothing but what I can prove by my own dear-bought experience, and your's too ; she has been a *Ziba* to both me and *Silvia*. But thro' mercy in both these cases her lying tongue has endur'd but for a moment, in comparison of the lasting effects that some-

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times attend these sowers of strife, these whisperers that seek to separate chief friends.

*Al.* I can't think what you mean by all this, pray explain yourself; did not *Zibago* and slander *Mephibosheth* to *David*? Can you prove that she has slander'd you and *Silvia*?

*Bel.* It is above two years ago, when we were you know very young, that she was for a time a companion of mine; but I had then like to have lost entirely one of my best friends through some stories she raised of me, which at first gain'd so much credit with her as to create a shyness between us; but she, having a mind truly formed for friendship, instead of breaking the acquaintance, sent for me, and told me that she heard I had said such and such things of her: now, added she, you cannot, *Belinda*, think but I must take it very ill of you, and that has caused the reserve you must have taken notice of; but as you know my temper is always to be open and speak my mind freely, I could not be easy till I had done it. I replied, by asking her whether *Letitia* was not her author. She could not deny it, but seem'd loth to own it, and said, Why should I think of her? I told her for a very good reason, because I perfectly remembered that one day she said those very things to me that were now repeated, and as near as I could recollect in the very words; that I was so far from ever saying any thing like it, that I check'd her for such surmises, which I told her I was fully persuaded were altogether groundless; and desir'd, for her full conviction, I might assert it before *Letitia* herself.

FAMILIAR DIALOGUES. 87

herself. On this, taking me by the hand in a most friendly manner, she said, Dear *Belinda*, there is no need of that, for, as I have no distrust of your veracity, I can believe you, and am very glad I took this freedom with you. I said I was sure, so was I, as by this means I hoped I had regain'd my friend, and discover'd a backbiter in the disguise of one. We parted in the most amicable manner, and continued in love and friendship till it pleased God to remove her, which was about a year after.

*Al.* I cannot, indeed, now wonder at you for suspecting *Letitia* may have done me a like ill office with *Silvia*, since she is capable of such falshood and deceit, which I could not have imagined.

*Bel.* You know from the first I suspected it, but now I can, as I before told you, prove it. For being griev'd to think *Silvia* should lose your friendship and esteem, through such a base detracter, I resolv'd to ask *Amasia* what that conversation was; as she is you know, a disinterested person in the affair, and one to be depended on.

*Al.* I know she is, and 'twas with her *Silvia* was talking, as *Letitia* told me, which vext me so much the more, as I could not think what her end in it could be, unless it was to keep *Amasia* from contracting an intimacy with me, which she well knew I wanted, by making her sensible I was below her notice; and I thought, she must herself take it in that light.

*Bel.* I'll tell you how she took it, and what

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the whole affair was. *Amasia* said, talking of acquaintance, I think, *Silvia*, no one is happier than you in this respect. To which *Silvia* replied, she had great reason to be thankful for her lot on this account; for she believed 'twould be hard to find such another knot of pious, ingenious, and faithful friends, as that she had the honour to make one of, tho' below most of them. To which *Letitia* in her smart way, turning to *Amasia*, said, I am glad, *Silvia*, in her great modesty, has not set herself quite at the bottom, even below *Belinda*. *Silvia* immediately replied, That I shall very readily do, for tho' *Belinda* is, I grant, placed by her fortune below me, she is my superior by birth, and so much more so in valuable endowments, as makes me look upon my acquaintance with her, one of the greatest blessings of my life. We have known and loved each other from our infancy, and had she not been half so deserving of esteem as she is, I hope I should not have discover'd so much pride as to break off our intimacy, because Providence has so unexpectedly added to what I was likely to have. This was, said *Amasia*, to my best remembrance, the whole that pass'd on that subject; and I took such particular notice of *Letitia*'s insinuating and detracting way of speaking, as made me look on her with coldness the rest of the time; as that humility, good nature, and sincere friendship *Silvia* discover'd, rais'd my esteem of her to a far higher pitch. I then told her the reason of my taking the freedom to ask her concerning it. She was astonish'd to hear that



that so young a creature could be arrived to so great a height of wickedness, as to delight in making lies out of the spite and malice of her heart; for she could see no views of any profit she could propose, by thus trying to sow discord amongst those that love as brethren. And now, whether *Silvia* or *Letitia* be the guilty person, I call upon you, *Almira*, to judge.

*Al.* Dear *Belinda*, I return you many thanks for the pains you have taken to discover to me my own wretched credulity and *Letitia's* perfidiousness. She has, as you said, indeed prov'd a *Ziba* to me, robbing me of a friend whom I valu'd, I believe, far more than *David* did *Mephibosheth*, for his friendship to him, I think, seems to be chiefly for *Jonathan's* sake, but mine was for her own.

*Bel.* What do you mean by losing your friend, now you are satisfied there is no obstruction in the way to your going with me?

*Al.* Oh *Belinda*! you are mistaken; had I been so wise as to hearken to you at first, this might have been the case, but alas! this seemingly gross affront blew up all the remaining sparks of pride into a full blaze, and I wrote her a very angry letter, wherein I told her that I should no longer give her the mortification of associating with one so much beneath her; that though she knew not well how to break off, I did. I sent it two days ago, but have had no answer.

*Bel.* I must own I was very sorry to find you had carried your resentment so far, before you had any fuller proof of just ground for it.

*Al.* Why, how came you to know of my writing? Have you seen her?

*Bel.* Yes, I came from her to you; she ask'd me what I thought of it, saying, You cannot think the uneasiness it has given me, it must certainly be founded on some mistake, for I am very positive I could never be capable of saying any thing so very foreign to my thoughts. I have been going to write to her; then I imagin'd 'twould be better to see her, and hear what she said; but as I found she was so very warm, I concluded to stay a few days longer to let her cool a little, but I can't think of losing her friendship so, nor of letting my character lie aspers'd, even in her imagination, for want of a due vindication of my own innocence. I then told her she might make herself easy on her own account, for I had found out the sower of this discord, and gave her the relation of the fact. She express'd the utmost joy at this discovery, and suitable resentment against the offender; but, says she I own it grieves me much to think my dear *Almira* should give credit to a report that cast such a blemish on her old and long-tried friend, without ever giving me an hearing: I could not have parted with her so easily. Here the tears trickled down.

*Al.* I richly deserve these reflections, I acknowledge, and my character must now appear as contemptible in her sight, as, when you came in, her's did in mine, which made me say I had by my folly, pride, and passion lost my friend.

*Bel.* No, far from it, I'll assure you, she has

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has no resentment against you, and that grief which the strength of her love excites, only makes her the more desirous of seeing you, that there may be a perfect reconciliation. I could not well come this morning, but she would take no denial, begging I would undeceive you, and bring you thither with me this afternoon.

*Al.* Most willingly will I go, tho' I know not how I shall bear up in her presence under the just accusations of my own mind, join'd with those upbraidings of an injured friend I must expect to meet.

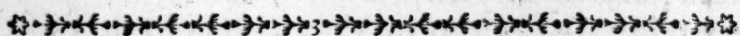
*Bel.* You have no cause for fear on this head; *Silvia* may expostulate, but she will not upbraid; she is too mild and good to carry it so to any one, especially one that she sees condemns herself. A bare acknowledgment will I am sure be sufficient.

*Al.* I know it, my dear, I know it full well, that *Silvia* is all condescension and goodness; but how inexcusable does this render the unworthy suspicions I have entertain'd of her? And how much does it condemn the different part I have acted in this affair? Well might the wise man say, the discretion of a man deferreth his anger. Thus wisely has she acted; whereas, on the contrary, I who have answered a matter before I had sufficiently heard it, find it to be folly and shame to me.

*Bel.* As we can no ways recal the past, the only true wisdom would be to draw some profitable instructions from our slips. And sure in this instance we may plainly see the need

we have of caution and circumspection; that we may guard as much as possible against those who flatter with their mouths, whilst mischief is in their hearts.

*Al.* And I am sure, I ought to learn to guard against passing rash and hasty judgment on my friends; and to answer both these designs, which I see are so reasonable, and will be so useful. I hope I shall make the book of Proverbs more my study than I have ever done, though it has been so often recommended to me. And may God, of his rich grace, grant me that wisdom which is proper to direct my way, and regulate my temper.



## DIALOGUE XII.

*Between MYRA and PHILOMELA, on a passionate Temper.*

*Myr.* I Am very glad to see you, *Philomela*.

**I** *Phi.* Pray, *Myra*, are you not well?  
I am surpriz'd to see you look so.

*Myr.* Yes, very well, I thank you.

*Phi.* Nay, but something is the matter, I am sure. Why you seem to be all in a tremble. Have you been frighten'd?

*Myr.* No. 'Tis nothing but my sister and I have had a little tiff, and the cross flut has made a story of it to my mamma; so she takes her part, and is very angry with me; but you have luckily come in to save me from a long lecture, and I hope I shall hear no more of it. I suppose I may look a little discomposed, for I never saw my mamma so angry in my life.

*Phi.*



*Phi.* I always took *Elvira* to be of a very mild and peaceable disposition.

*Myr.* She is good-humour'd, when she is pleas'd, as most folks are; and she is such a favourite that few people offer to displease her, which now and then however I venture to do; and having happen'd to do it to-day, she is gone crying to my mamma; which give her her due, I never knew her do before, and she shall get nothing by it now, that I'll assure her.

*Phi.* Dear *Myra*, will you be so good as to bear with me, if I speak my mind freely?

*Myr.* I assure you I will, for I am very sensible of the regard you have for me.

*Phi.* Then I must tell you, I fear you have been much to blame in your behaviour to *Elvira*, and I have a great while wanted to find an opportunity of talking to you on this subject.

*Myr.* Wherein am I wrong? Would you have me, because I am a year younger than she, be a slave to all her humours? That I'll never be.

*Phi.* I am as far from desiring it, as you can be from doing it; but I must own I never observ'd any thing in her that look'd like humour or caprice: I have often thought she has shown a remarkable command of her temper when we have been warm with her.

*Myr.* I find you are like the rest, so partial in her favour that I am not like to get much by complaining to you.

*Phi.* Nay, my dear, if I am govern'd by partiality, it must I am sure draw me over to your side. 'Tis we that have past our years of childhood and earliest youth together;  
when

when we came from school, *Elvira* was, you know, as a stranger to me; but between *us* has been a long, and, I hope, a lasting friendship; and 'tis only the strength of my affection for you, that could bear me out in the performance of this most disagreeable office of true friendship. I love you so sincerely, and so ardently, that I can't help desiring you might be freed from any irregularity in temper or conduct, that tends to shade and obscure the many amiable qualities you possess. I have heard you own you were passionate, but I fear you have never duly reflected on the evil of indulging such a temper.

*Myr.* Yes, I know I am hasty, as well as you can tell me; but I can no more help that, than, I suppose, *Elvira* can help crying when we disagree; she shows her resentment in her way, and I in mine; that is all the difference I know; I believe we are equally vexed.

*Phi.* I rather think *Elvira's* tears flow from grief, for she seems to be extremely fond of you; and I don't doubt but you love her too, for all these petty jars.

*Myr.* Love her, yes I love her enough, at least I have done so, but if she goes on to serve me as she has done to-day, and make my mamma angry with me, she will soon wean me quite.

*Phi.* As to this affair I can say nothing, because I am a stranger to it; what I have spoke has been from the observations I have made, and as I could plainly perceive you were greatly ruffled, I concluded it might be somewhat like the usual occasions of raising  
your

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your passion; and I fear, indeed, that this foible of yours is gaining strength, as I never saw you appear so discomposed with it before; nor do you seem yet quite recover'd.

*Myr.* I believe, indeed, I never was more provok'd, and you shall be judge whether it was without occasion. As we were rising, I said I would ask my mamma to let us go to see *Arpatia* to-day. She replied, I heard her say last night that she should send to *Sophronia*, and then I must send to *Lucinda*, we being engag'd you know when they would have come. I told her to-morrow would do as well for that, and I had rather go out to-day, therefore I would ask: with that she return'd, then only ask for yourself, pray, for you will be to go by yourself; I shan't you may be sure, send for *Lucinda*, and leave her when I have done; nor shall I omit sending with my mamma, I am sure that would be very strange. I told her she made great difficulties where there were none at all, for I meant that they should neither of them be sent to, till to-morrow. She replied, Indeed I shan't put my mamma by, by asking to go out, for I had much rather have *Lucinda's* company, which I long to enjoy, and it won't look handsome to my mamma: you may do as you please. This provok'd me extremely indeed, because I thought she only did it to cross me; and I said 'twas very hard I must always be kept as an underling, and treated like a baby by her; that I would have my will sometimes as well as she, and would not bear it as I had done. She replied, you may have it always as well as I, if you will do as I do, and fall in cheerfully

fully with whatever is my mamma's pleasure. In short, one word brought on another, and I must own I was at length too warm to be able to remember what I said; but I know nothing of saying any thing so very gross as she pretends I did. I believe I told her she need not pretend to teach as well as govern me, for I would neither learn of her nor be ruled by her. And I might have, perhaps, gone on longer, but I thought I heard my mamma coming up; so as soon as I could, I went down; and when a while after, I went to ask my mamma to go, she told me she would consider of it; which I wonder'd at; but a little before you came in, she call'd me into her chamber, and told me she was surpriz'd I should ask her such a question, after the treatment I had given *Elvira* about this affair. She was in hopes when my passion had been over, I would have consider'd better of it. And as I had not, she thought proper to take some notice of it, and shew me the unreasonableness of my conduct. But your coming has happily saved me from the rest.

*Phi.* Well, my dear, I greatly approve of the sincerity with which you have told your story; which is a virtue I always observ'd very conspicuous in all your words and actions, but at the same time must own that I am surpriz'd to see you not yet enough mistress of your temper, to consider that the light in which you have placed your own conduct, is such as must make it appear, as your mamma said, most unreasonable, even in the eyes of those who are much less capable of making a true judgment of things than *Myra* is: but



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as you so rejoice that you got free from your mamma's lecture, and are above being taught by *Elvira*, you will doubtless think me very impertinent in my remarks, and therefore begging your pardon for this freedom, I'll trouble you no more now, as I see the subject is so displeasing.

*Myr.* Indeed, *Philomela*, I take all you have said, kindly of you, and am sensible I have the most need to ask pardon for the hasty manner in which I have taken you up. I am now grown cool, and I hope I shall hear with a due attention whatever you have to say to me, and therefore beg you would go on, and convince me if you can wherein I have been in the wrong. That it would be better not to fall into a passion on any provocation, if I could help it, I will readily own; but that I had no reason to resent my sister's treatment, I can't see.

*Phi.* Since it is at your own desire I, proceed, I hope you will not be offended at my setting this case before you in the light in which I view it; which may also tend to convince you, how much your passion blinds your judgment in others. If you reflect, you can't but own that it was most reasonable that your mamma should chuse her day for visitors.

*Myr.* That's true: but then if she had consented to alter it, there would be no harm in my asking her, and I should be the same if she did not, as I am now.

*Phi.* No, my dear, I think there is a great difference between doing a thing because you know 'tis your mamma's pleasure; and be-  
K cause

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cause you are obliged to do it, and can't help yourself.

*Myr.* Indeed I never consider'd that before; for I always thought if I had my mamma's consent for any thing it was enough, never minding whether she was pleas'd with it or not; as, I believe, I should have done: And to be sure had I in this case, it might have kept me from quarreling with *Elvira*; but this does not excuse her for making mischief, by telling my mamma.

*Phi.* Perhaps here you may be too hasty in your censure of her; if your mamma saw her crying, she might be obliged to tell the occasion; are you sure it was not so?

*Myr.* No, indeed I am not; and upon second thoughts, I believe it might be so for I heard my mamma go into our room not long after. And if so, I have wronged her.

*Phi.* I am, my dear, extremely pleas'd to see you lie so open to conviction; and I hope from this instance you will have such a view as you never before had of the force of passion to blind the judgment, and the fatal consequences that attend the being led captive by it, since upon cool reflection you thus stand self-condemn'd as to the whole of this affair.

*Myr.* You say right, and I own your reflections just; but can you tell me how to help it, and how to cure this evil in my temper? The sight of my folly, or the effects of it, will do me no good if I cannot avoid it. I have been often vex'd at myself when my passion was over, and sorry for what I have said or done in it, and wish'd I were of your temper a hundred times.

*Phi.*

*Phi.* Mine ! Alas, *Myra*, mine is too near a-kin to your's, to be a proper object of your wishes. This is the foible I have been chiefly combatting with, and striving to gain a conquest over, ever since I was capable of making reflections on it.

*Myr.* What ! *Philomela* passionate ? Sure it can't be ! I never saw nor heard any thing like it in you. Certainly you mistake your temper, or you have had some uncommon art to conceal it.

*Phi.* I don't mistake my temper ; I have had, and still have, at times, but too plain proof of it. I am sensible, indeed, that I never was so apt to take fire on every trifling occasion, as some are ; and I believe 'twas chiefly owing to this that it was so little discern'd in my years of childhood. And in my very early youth, finding the uneasiness these tempests when raised frequently gave me, I set myself with vigour and resolution to lay them at their first rising. And by watching, and praying, and striving against it, I have, I bless God, in part, tho' far from compleatly, subdued it ; for still, alas ! it often raises such storms in my breast as greatly ruffle and discompose my thoughts, which is the matter of my constant grief. But the success with which my attempts have been blest'd, has made me long desirous of taking some opportunity of putting you on a like experiment, and I hope this will prove the proper season.

*Myr.* Dear *Philomela*, be my instructor, and let me know what tis I am to do ; for I think I should stick at no pains, if I could hope

ever to attain, so far as you have done, this happy art.

*Pbi.* 'Tis more than time I was gone, my mamma will wonder at my stay; for I talk'd only of just stepping to speak to you. I hope I shall see you at our house before the week is out, and then, if you desire it, we will talk that part over more at large.

*Myr.* Well, but pray, before you go, tell me what are the first steps I am to take; for I am resolv'd, thro' divine assistance, to begin from this very day, if I know but how.

*Pbi.* You are got farther than the first step already, I'll assure you, *Myra*.

*Myr.* What do you mean? I have done nothing towards it yet.

*Pbi.* Yes, my dear, a great deal have you done. The conviction of a fault is always reckon'd the first step to reformation.

*Myr.* Then I am got over that step, I am sure; I am fully sensible of my failings in this respect.

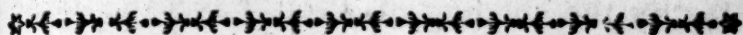
*Pbi.* But you have advanced farther, as you not only desire, but resolve, by the grace of God, to amend; now this, I think, a considerable progress; as this conviction and these resolutions will, if kept up with the same warmth on your mind, I doubt not, lead you to confess and bewail your sin before God, to implore pardon for it thro' *Christ*, and to pray with frequency, earnestness, and importunity, for those assistances of his grace, which are necessary to strengthen you for the important work. And I would recommend to you the careful study of the Proverbs, where you will find



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find what will be a daily antidote against passion, and an incentive to meekness.

*Myr.* I know not how to express my sense of this instance of your friendship. Adieu.



DIALOGUE XIII.

*On the Means of subduing a passionate Temper.*

BETWEEN the SAME.

*Phi.* **D**EAR *Myra*, this speedy return to my visit, gives me a double pleasure, as with the delight your company always yielded me, I have the satisfaction of finding my unusual freedom has not lost my friend; which had I not been too much afraid of, I had not delayed so long speaking to you.

*Myr.* I think that was a groundless fear; for had you not, by your kind endeavours, convinc'd my judgment of the reasonableness of a contrary behaviour, and been the happy means of inspiring my breast with those fixt resolutions I now have, thro' divine assistance, to labour after attaining to it; I hope I should not have been so weak as to resent what must have appear'd to me a friendly attempt. But I thought the time long, till I could see you again, to repeat my thanks, and desire your farther assistance.

*Phi.* I am a very poor assistant indeed, but shall gladly afford you what little help I am capable of giving you.

*Myr.* I look upon you as peculiarly qualified for this office, because I find you can speak from experience, and therefore whatever has been serviceable to you on this account, may by the blessing of God have the same happy effect on me. And I have found your first directions not altogether useless. I have not only read over the Proverbs, but made a collection of all the scriptures against anger, and recommending a contrary disposition; and the view of them thus together has given me such a sight of the deformity and fatal consequences of passion, and the beauty and excellency of meekness, that were I not so fully convinced as I am of my sin against God, in indulging this temper, I think I should be excited to make some attempts after a conquest over it.

*Phi.* I am very glad to hear that you see this matter in so true a light. But pray did your mamma take any farther notice to you of that affair.

*Myr.* Yes she did. That evening she took me into her chamber again, and talk'd it over with me in a very calm and serious manner; which, as I was before self-condemn'd, I was in some measure prepar'd suitably to receive. I freely own'd my fault, and told her I hoped I should be more upon my guard against passion for the future. Soon after, being alone with *Elvira*, I said to her, that I was sensible I was in the wrong in what occasioned that dispute in the morning; but I thought it was very unkind in her, to tell it to my mamma. She replied, I have to this day strove to hide  
your

your faults from her, to keep you from anger, and also to prevent the increase of that concern which I well know your temper gives her; but this I could not, for my mamma finding me weeping, and suspecting the cause, obliged me to tell her the whole story. But, added she, as you are sensible of the fault, I hope you will strive against that quickness of your temper which occasion'd it, and then you will find the advantage of it, in the constant calm of your own mind, and I the comfort of living in that love and peace with you, which has always been my desire. I said, I hope I shall endeavour it.

*Phi.* I don't doubt but you will be enabled to make great advances, if you do but keep up the same sentiments of the excellence and importance of the work in which you are engaged, as now seem to inspire your mind.

*Myr.* I am sometimes in hopes I shall; but alas! the very next day, no sooner did a slight provocation arise, but my passion took fire, and all my powers were thrown into the utmost disorder. I had, indeed, just command enough of myself to go away without speaking a word.

*Phi.* 'Twas a noble step; for a retreat, in this case, is far more heroic than to face the enemy, till we are well assur'd we have strength to combat with him. This was one of those means, I was going to tell you I had found the advantage of, as I question not you did.

*Myr.* So far I did, that I soon grew calm; on my retiring and considering the nature of the offence, I quickly perceiv'd that the most  
I could

I could make of it, was a careless neglect in my maid ; which, tho' it would be proper to take notice of, to guard her against the like for the future, was a crime no ways equal to the treatment, my anger, if indulg'd, would have given her ; as I too well know from frequent experience on like occasions. Nay, I reflected on it till I was fully convinced that my crime, in being so soon angry, was really greater than that which the maid was guilty of. And the thought that I had not suffer'd my passion to break out, afforded me a greater pleasure. Yet as it was only conceal'd, not extinguished, I was in fear lest the guilt were the same. What do you think of it ?

*Phi.* No, by no means. How could the guilt be the same ? You, by thus suppressing your passion, were kept from all those unguarded expressions which at such times generally are plentifully pour'd forth, and often make work for bitter repentance. And by thus wisely retreating, you avoided what farther temptation the occasion might have presented ; and, you own, soon regain'd your temper so far as to be able to reason calmly on the matter. I assure you, I think this a noble conquest for the first attempt ; and even greater than I can sometimes obtain, after so many repeated ones.

*Myr.* Nay, I went a little farther in this affair ; for when I was thus cool, I calmly told my maid of her fault, at which I saw the girl look'd more surpriz'd than she used to do when I talked to her in my usual way ; and presently owning it, promis'd amendment, which promise she has hitherto kept.

*Phi.*



*Phi.* I am heartily glad to hear this, for the being able to talk coolly on any subject that was wont to ruffle me, is the greatest attainment I have yet been able to make. For at first, a second or third attempt would be apt to produce the same effects as the first, at least in some degree. And I wonder not at the success on your maid's part, for I have often thought how absurd a conduct it is to fall into a passion either with servants or children, under the notion of shewing authority, and keeping it up. There being no surer way of losing that authority, and rendering the person contemptible to those that are under them.

*Myr.* I believe you are in the right, tho' I never thought of this before. But I know very well, that when my pappa has been in a passion with us or the servants, what he has said has been only regarded as the effects of it; whereas when he has reprov'd us in a more calm but grave or solemn way, it has caused an awful attention. But this to me is matter of the greatest surprize, that so good a man as I believe my pappa is, should not see what to me now appears so very plain, that both duty and interest join to stir us up to the utmost endeavours to subdue these exorbitant passions; for sure, if he saw this matter in the same light I now do, he had long ere this got an entire mastery over it; whereas I can't perceive that the strength of his is at all weaken'd.

*Phi.* We have before observ'd, that that is a natural infirmity, and as you then own'd, you thought yourself excusable on that account, because it was what you could not help.

help. This is, I believe, but too frequently all the reflection that is made upon it, especially by young persons; that this unhappy temper gains daily strength by indulgence, and fixes itself so deep, that 'tis like a poisonous plant, which tho' pluck'd up with ease at its first sprouting, if neglected till it has taken deep rooting in the earth, you may tug and tug in vain, for there it keeps its hold. And I believe this is the case with many serious persons, with respect to any constitutional vice, and this in particular. You have doubtless, heard that noted saying concerning one justly esteem'd for great eminence in some respects, that is to say, That he had grace enough for ten men, but not enough for himself. This sin to which he was so much inclin'd, this irregular passion was so deeply rooted, that, tho' he pray'd and strove against it, he was often led captive by it.

*Myr.* This observation of your's is indeed very agreeable to what my mamma has often told me, that if I did not in some measure strive to govern my passion whilst I was young, I was never likely to get any considerable conquest over it. But what she said on this head I paid very little regard to, because as she is of so mild and easy a temper, I thought she was talking of what she was an utter stranger to; and because she was not provoked to fall into a passion on any occasion, did not know how difficult it was for young persons of so different a temper to avoid it; much less did I imagine it could be more so, for one grown up to some maturity in knowledge and experience.

*Phi.*

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*Phi.* Our task in keeping under, and labouring to expel these turbulent guests, is so hard, that were it not for the encouragement we have to pray and hope for a strength superior to our own, we might be tempted to sit down in despair; but we well know custom, long custom, adds great strength to any habit, and consequently we have to deal with very weak and impotent foes, when compared with those who begin the assault in elder life.

*Myr.* But these same assistances which we must receive, could surely subdue their passions, tho' so much stronger; for what can be too hard for all-powerfull grace? Therefore I cannot still help wond'ring that so many good people should yet discover this temper to so great a degree, and especially my pappā; who, by what I have heard him say, was religious very young: But perhaps he went on as I did, without seeing the evil of it.

*Phi.* 'Tis very likely he did, and was not so happy as to be brought to a sense of it, till it grew strong and stubborn. And though the grace of God is indeed able to conquer the most headstrong lust; yet who is there that aright applies for those extraordinary aids which such a case requires, or suitably improves those aids he does receive? So that this is no reflection either on religion in general, or on the peculiar honours of divine grace, for we may lay this down as an undoubted truth, that God has made nothing our duty, which he has not furnish'd us with sufficient means for performing. 'Tis therefore, questionless, the great sin of those in years, that they

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they are led captive by this enemy ; but tho' we are witness to their failings, their frequent mournings, their deep repentance on the account hereof is hid from us ; else perhaps we should consider them more worthy our pity than censure.

*Myr.* 'Tis time for me to go, but I must beg you to give me a few directions, that I may have them continually before me.

*Phi.* I have a discourse on meekness, which with the blessing of God was extremely serviceable to me ; I will lend it you if you please, as there you will see the whole subject set in a very beautiful and affecting light, and find also proper directions for the attaining this shining ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

*Myr.* How much am I obliged to you for this kindness ! I shall read it with no small care.



DIALOGUE XIV.

*Between AURELIA and SARISSA, on redeeming Time.*

*Aur.* I Am very glad to see you, *Sarissa* ; you are a great stranger at our house.

*Sar.* I have been prevented by company, else I had waited on you sooner : but pray are you not well ? Or is any thing the matter with you ? Are you angry I am come now ?  
For



For you speak so gravely, and look so thoughtfully, that I am surprized at it.

*Aur.* I am well, I bless God, and all our family; and I am sure I spoke from my heart, when I said I was glad to see you, for I believe I have wished for you twenty times within this week past; so that none of these reasons have caused any alteration in my countenance or speech. But I cannot wonder that you should take some notice of it, as you might imagine 'twas something more than ordinary, that must make so giddy, thoughtless a creature as I have been, look or speak gravely.

*Sar.* Pray is the reason then a secret? If it be, I'll enquire no farther.

*Aur.* It has been so hitherto, but what I so much wish'd to see you for was, that I might tell you; tho' now you are come, I scarce know how to speak my mind.

*Sar.* If that be the case, I shall be importunate in my request, as the communicating any cause of uneasiness is oft a great relief.

*Aur.* 'Tis so, but I have a farther view in speaking to you, as I know you are capable of giving me proper advice.

*Sar.* If it be what I could in any respect serve you in, it would give me a great pleasure; but I am an unfit person to be an adviser, if it be a case of great importance.

*Aur.* 'Tis indeed a case of the last importance to me; yet I know no person that I could speak to, so likely to assist me as you. And to keep you no longer in suspense, I will let you into the true state of the case.

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About

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About a week ago a grave, aged minister, that my pappa used to hear when he was a lad, came to make him a visit. And a little before he went, as somebody spoke about pastimes, he took it up, and said he was often greatly surpriz'd to find that any who professed themselves christians should seem to be at a loss how to pass the time away, and could think of no better employment for that purpose, than mere idle amusements or vain diversions. Then turning to me, who sat next him, he took me by the hand and said, Young lady, excuse my freedom, and pray take this from an old man's mouth, which may perhaps be remember'd when I am in my grave; that Time is one of the richest talents which you are intrusted with, and for the improvement of which you are accountable to God; that 'tis given you to prepare for eternity; and that if you trifle or squander away the present Now, you know not whether you shall be spared to an Hereafter. Remember therefore, now thy Creator, and thy Redeemer, in the days of thy youth, and let these sprightly, vigorous powers with which you are so liberally endow'd, be laid out with alacrity in the noblest pursuits; God's glory, and the securing and furthering your own everlasting happiness. My pappa thank'd him for his exhortation, and said, I pray God it may be deeply impress'd on her heart, which would make me one of the happiest of fathers. I scarce knew how to contain myself, I was so much affected. It was not the expressions so much that mov'd me, for the same things, I had,

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I had, to be sure, heard many times before ; few having had both the value and importance of time set before them more frequently than I. But the gravity of the good old gentleman, the solemnity with which he spake, the unusualness of such an address to me, with what my pappas said, seem'd all to conspire to force a way for these truths to enter into my heart and fix there. For indeed I have been capable of thinking on little else ever since.

*Sar.* I don't wonder that you are in an unusual manner impress'd on the occasion, as there was something in it that tended peculiarly to awaken the attention, and strike upon the passions. And as the impressions still continue, I think 'tis a good ground of hope that God, who works by what means, and in what way he pleases, has taken the opportunity of this awakening call, to rouse you up to a vigorous pursuit of your best interests; which indeed I have often fear'd you were too regardless of, and I wanted to talk with you about it.

*Aur.* Oh *Sarissa*! too regardless did you say? Why I have been entirely so. Why were you not so kind as to speak to me? It may be I might have attended to what you had said, and thereby you might have been the happy means of preventing my mispending all my time as I have done.

*Sar.* Indeed I have no proper excuse to make for myself; none but what I may be ashamed to tell. Sometimes I have been afraid you would take it ill; but this I well know, I ought to have ventur'd. Sometimes a faulty

backwardness to talk on such subjects hinder'd me. And sometimes, (tho' I had in my own mind resolv'd on it beforehand) when the time came, I have, instead thereof; encouraged and carried on the trifling discourse that was begun; and so join'd too willingly with you in the waste of our precious hours. The review of which has occasioned me melancholy reflections in my retirement.

*Aur.* Oh *Sarissa*! Had I but improved my time as you have done, I had been happy!

*Sar.* Alas! You are widely mistaken in me. I have a great deal of mispent time to reflect upon with grief, besides what I have mention'd as wasted with you; many precious hours that I have trifled away, which ought to have been employed in furnishing my mind with knowledge, for which I have so great advantages; or in what might be otherwise serviceable to myself, or those around me.

*Aur.* Supposing these self-accusations of your's were just, yet what I said is true. How happy should I be, had I only some misimproved time to reflect on! Whereas I have wasted all mine! And is it not a very sad thing to think on, that I should live to the age of near fifteen, without ever once seriously reflecting for what purpose my time was given me, or once considering the awful account I must have to render, should my judge now summon me to his bar?

*Sar.* I own 'tis sad; and such a conduct calls for sincere and deep repentance.

*Aur.* But dear *Sarissa*, to tell you all my mind freely, I must let you know, that I am  
fill'd



fill'd with such distressing fears lest I should be speedily call'd to give up my dreadful account, that I know not what to do. I can't think mine looks like repentance, it rather appears to be only the effects of terror, and dread of punishment. Pray tell me, is there any hope for me?

*Sar.* Hope! my dear; yes, and abundant ground of thankfulness and praise.

*Aur.* Wherein? I can see nothing, nor think of any thing, but what fills me with amazement and distress. This I know, that I have spent all my time as if it were my own, to be employ'd just as my own vain and foolish imaginations prompted, without employing one hour in serious thought, either of the duty I owed to God or man. And therefore what room for thankfulness can there be?

*Sar.* You ought, instead of filling your mind with these distressing fears, which unfit you for due reflection, to consider what a mercy 'tis that God has thus long borne with you, and now, not only given you time and space for repentance, but also in so remarkable a way call'd you to it, and by his own Spirit excited and awaken'd you, from that security in which you before lay. Banish therefore from your breast all those terrifying thoughts, which are indeed so far from being a part of that repentance to which you are by the gospel call'd, that they, whilst indulg'd, are fatal obstacles in the way of it. The sense of sin that leads to true repentance is to be accompanied with such an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, as may incline

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heart, with grief for and hatred of sin, to turn from it to God, and inspire firm purposes of, and endeavours after new and better obedience to the divine commands.

*Aur.* I think I may say I find somewhat of these dispositions in my mind; but I have been afraid to entertain hopes that there was mercy for such a sinner as I have been.

*Sar.* Has not God expressly promised, that he that confesseth, and forsaketh his sins, shall find mercy? And is not the blood of Jesus Christ sufficient to cleanse from all sin?

*Aur.* These very scriptures have come into my thoughts, when I was almost overwhelm'd, and seem'd to stay up my mind for a little time; but then when I reflected again on the aggravation of my guilt, that I had sin'd against instructions, reproofs, and awful warnings in the sudden death of a dear schoolfellow, and since of a dearer sister, both younger than I, I fear'd that awful threatening more justly belong'd to me, He that being often reprov'd, hardneth his heart, shall suddenly be destroy'd and that without remedy: and then my fears return'd.

*Sar.* This was plainly a temptation of the devil, to draw you off from taking that comfort the promises of God call'd you to receive: Therefore be no longer faithless, but believe, that he who has promis'd that whosoever comes to him he will in no wise cast them out, will be far from rejecting one that thus early applies to him; for he has for the encouragement of such in particular, said, Those that seek him early shall find him.

*Aur.*

*Aur.* What do you mean by early? You know I am not a year younger than you, and you have to my knowledge for some years past improv'd your time for the most valuable purposes; whereas all mine is lost.

*Sar.* I mean as I said, that 'tis early in comparison of multitudes round about, who go on thoughtlessly wasting all the prime of youth; nay employing their golden hours, and most sprightly and noble faculties, in the meanest and basest services. Whereas you have this farther ground of thankfulness, that you have not been left to fall into many of the too common vices of childhood and youth; such as disobedience to parents, lying, stubbornness, passion, or ill-nature, pride, or idleness; some or all of which are too apparent, frequently in those of your age. And tho' you have not practis'd the opposite virtues, that is to say, obedience, truth and sincerity; a yielding disposition, meekness, and good-humour; humility, affability and diligence, with that view to the command of God, and as parts of that duty which as a christian is enjoin'd you by your great Lord and Master, which I hope will be the governing principle with you in all your conduct for the future; yet the advantages arising from this restraining grace of God you have so largely receiv'd, have been many and great, and call for your thankful acknowledgments. How many sins have you been hereby prevented from committing, which would now have been like sharp arrows sticking in your conscience, and calling for bitter repentance. Nay, how much  
time

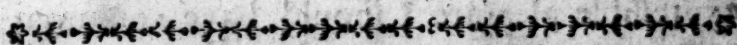
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time has by this means been fill'd up with its proper work? and what a happy stock of knowledge have you laid up for your comfort and usefulness in life, beyond many of your years? In some respects you have on this account improv'd your time far better than I have done; and my sins are greatly aggravated by the full conviction of my duty, and the inconsistency of my behaviour with my own prayers and solemn resolutions. And a view of my mis-spent time in this light, calls me to frequent deep repentance. But as bare complaints are of no avail, I hope we shall both of us labour after a conduct more agreeable to the full conviction we have of the value of time, and the importance of a due improvement of it. And that we may, let us join earnest prayers to diligent endeavours. But I have so much exceeded my time, that I must now leave you with my best wishes.

*Aur.* Dear *Sarissa*, If you must go, I shall soon return your visit, for I want farther directions from you.

*Sar.* The sooner, the better I shall like it. And in the mean time I will send you a book on the subject, wherein the worth of time, and the duty of improving it, is set forth at large; where you will find also, Directions for the performance of this great, but so much neglected duty.





## DIALOGUE XV.

*Concerning coming to the Lord's Table.*

*Between CELINDA and SARISSA.*

*Cel.* I Am very glad to see my dear *Sarissa*, for I have thought it a long while since I had the favour of a visit from you.

*Sar.* I design'd you one much sooner *Celinda* indeed, but I have been pretty much engag'd.

*Cel.* Pray, if one may be so free as to ask, what weighty affairs have you had on your hands? For I thought few had more time than you.

*Sar.* That's true in the general; but if you staid on Lord's-day, you must be sensible I have had an important work in hand, which call'd for no small share of my time and thoughts.

*Cel.* Yes, I was there, and found you were received at communion, which increased instead of lessening my wonder at your present strangeness; for I thought you might, as a friend, have let me into the secret, and seen whether I could have been induced to have borne you company.

*Sar.* My dear *Celinda*, had I once had a thought of that, it would have been with inexpressible

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expressible pleasure I should have communicated my intentions to you. But you must be sensible your reserve to me on this topic, notwithstanding our freedom in other respects, gave me no room for such an attempt; as I have more than once given some distant hints which might have led the way.

*Cel.* I own it, *Sarissa*, and own it as a great fault in me, which though in part owing to natural temper, I know I ought to try to overcome. But tho' I have never mentioned this affair to you, nor any one else, 'tis a subject I have had many thoughts about, and when I heard your name mentioned, could not but form a secret wish that mine had been joined with it.

*Sar.* Well, *Celinda*, then I hope you will resolve to follow me as soon as possible. And if it will be any encouragement to you to hear my experience, I will assure you the satisfaction I have found herein is so great, that I only repeat I no sooner broke through those obstacles which *Satan* and my own carnal imaginations threw in my way.

*Cel.* I wish you would be so good as to tell me what they were, and how you overcame them; which may perhaps be of great service to me.

*Sar.* It would be endless to relate to you all that has past in my mind on this affair, but I'll willingly sum up the chief.

It pleased God, in my early childhood, even about the eighth year of my age, to impress my mind with a deep sense of the worth of my precious immortal soul, of the need I  
stood

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stood in of a Saviour, for pardoning and renewing grace; and I trust I was drawn by the cords of divine love to give myself up entirely to him to be saved in his own way. I was soon convinced that 'tis the duty of every sincere christian to make a public as well as private surrender of himself to God in Christ, and openly avow the cause and interest of that master he professes to serve; but I was kept from taking any steps in order hereto, by my age; for as I had never heard of any so young that were admitted, I feared if I offer'd myself for communion, I should be refus'd. This made me easy in my delay for some time. After which, when fresh convictions of duty broke in, I fell into so desponding a temper for some time, as effectually deterr'd me from a work of this nature; and when I had attain'd to a more settled peace of mind, and began to renew my thoughts on the affair; then (with other objections) that of speaking to the minister arose before my view in so formidable a light, I saw no way to surmount it. These were my chief hindrances.

*Cel.* Well, my Dear *Sarissa*, I long to know how you got thro' these difficulties; for I must own, you have given an exact description of what has past in my own mind; but the way to get through them, has not yet been found out by me.

*Sar.* I hope you will be enabled to break through them all with more ease than I did; but I will readily inform you in what manner I at length overcame them.

The

The objection on the account of my age, as I before hinted, remain'd for a long time in it's full power, even above two years; and on renewing the debate, it still pleaded strenuously against my attempt. But I considered, that I was not to be govern'd by the example of those around me, any farther than their conduct was agreeable to the rule of God's word; that this was a plain and express duty; that I found no age for admission fix'd in the Scripture; that as for my staying for greater improvements in knowledge and grace, (which next offer'd to my thoughts) it was in reality to neglect taking a sovereign medicine till I was in good part recovered from my disease; that the church is the school of Christ, into which all who sincerely desire to be his disciples, are to enter, that they may be train'd up to greater advances, by the special advantages there enjoyed; that the sacrament of the Lord's-supper is peculiarly adapted, and if duly attended on, blest to the worthy receiver, for his spiritual nourishment and growth in grace. On such considerations I came to a full determination no longer to delay keeping this command of my God, my dearest Saviour, my crucified Redeemer. This was I believe, near a year ago.

*Cel.* But how came you to delay putting your designs in execution?

*Sar.* Then started up that difficulty, which at first seem'd unsurmountable. I mean the speaking to the minister.

*Cel.* I want sadly to know how you got over that.

*Sar.*



*Sar.* Truly I made a tedious work of it ; and sometimes when I thought myself firmly resolv'd, my courage fail'd me again, and my purposes vanish'd into smoak ; but I reflected on those words of my blessed Lord, that whoever should be asham'd of him and his words, of them would he be asham'd at the great day ; but that they who courageously own and confess him as their Lord and Master before men, he would then confess them, own and treat them as his disciples before his Father, and before angels and men : farther, that the word commands me to be ready always to give, to every one that asketh me, a reason of the hope that is in me, with meekness and fear : and surely, thought I, I should in a peculiar manner be thus ready, when such a declaration is a necessary step in order to my complying with my own duty. I farther argued thus with myself : What ! am I, if called to it, to give an account of my faith, when this confession might expose me to imprisonment or death, which is the case our Saviour seems to have in view ? Am I neither to regard the superiority of those before whom I stand, nor the shame, reproach, or danger such an acknowledgement would expose me to ? These are the terms, I know I have pretended to comply with. I have, in dependence on divine grace, resolved that I will take up my cross and follow my Redeemer whenever he calls me to it. And shall I think it a great hardship to take some pains with myself, and put some force upon myself, to break thro' that natural shyness and reserve, that is so apt

to appear on this occasion? These considerations I found of no small weight with me, and determined my compliance. This morning I was going to the minister, filled with solicitous thoughts, that place came with weight on my mind, Take no thought how or what you shall to speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what you ought to say. I was, indeed, very sensible, that this was a promise made on a far more difficult occasion, and that therefore I could not expect the same degrees of assistance; yet I found it inspire a hope, that according to my measure, and the nature of my case, it should be fulfilled to me. And, blessed be God, my hopes were not utterly frustrated; for I gave such an account as was to satisfaction. Yet, alas! my difficulties ended not here!

*Ccl.* No! ——— What could farther lie in your way?

*Sar.* As I was then younger than I suppose that society had ever admitted, there was somebody rais'd an objection, and carried it so far, that the minister thought proper not to propose me the next Lord's day as he had design'd. And tho' he, in the kindest and gentlest manner, let me know it, and told me he would not have me discourag'd at waiting a little longer, this was the means of throwing my mind into the utmost distress! and thus I reason'd with myself; I had better not have been so hasty in this affair; for is not plainly the hand of God to be seen against me herein; I ought to see and acknowledge it; and, instead of being uneasy, to be thankful that

that by thus blocking up my way he has prevented the aggravated guilt I might have contracted by an unworthy receiving ; for had I been a proper subject, the path to duty would not have been thus shut up. As these reflections appear'd to me just, I rather took them as the effect of due consideration, than as the temptations of Satan ; so that, drawing from them the most melancholy conclusions against myself, instead of continued desire to be admitted, I was even ready to tremble at the thought of my bold presumption, in offering to lay claim to the childrens bread, to which I had no right. But, I bless God, it was not very long ere I attain'd again my former peace of mind.

*Cel.* I think such an instance should make Christians very careful what discouragements they lay in the way of young ones ; for certainly it must have occasion'd much concern to the party, had it been known what distress the step taken had caus'd you.—But how came you, my dear *Sarissa*, after you were easy in your mind, to continue your neglect so long, as you were providentially remov'd from thence, and fix'd where you had no prospect of meeting with any obstruction ?

*Sar.* Alas ! *Celinda*, it is impossible for any one who has not had some experience of the subtilty of *Satan*, and the deceitfulness of her own heart, to conceive what a variety of obstacles are by the one and the other plac'd in the way of duty ! Even after my peace of mind return'd, the discouragement I had met with, seem'd to me a sufficient argument to

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justify my delay ; and as for my remove, that rais'd a fresh difficulty, as I had a new minister to speak to ; but on providentially hearing my duty strongly prest from the pulpit, new resolutions took place ; which as you see, I have, blessed be God, been enabled to put in execution. Thus I have, my dear *Celinda*, given you the account you desir'd, and have been the more particular, as you hinted a resemblance in our case.

*Cel.* I did so, and think myself extremely oblig'd to you ; and I must own you have answer'd all my objections but one, so far, that I can make no reasonable reply.

*Sar.* I am very glad of it ; but pray let's have that one, whatever it be, over again, that we may see what may be farther said to it. What is it ?

*Cel.* Nay, 'tis that which is of the greatest moment ; a fear lest I am not sincere in my pretensions to religion.

*Sar.* That we ought to be jealous lest we should deceive ourselves with false hopes, or take up a profession of religion without experiencing the power of it in our hearts, I readily allow. On the other hand, we ought not to distress ourselves with groundless fears, and make these pleas for omitting a known duty ; for this is not a situation of mind to be rested in, even tho' no such affair were in the thoughts : for can any thing appear more shocking to serious persons, than an utter uncertainty how it will be like to fare with them thro' the ages of an endless eternity ? And this temper of mind must sure be look'd upon as very

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ry dangerous as well as uncomfortable, when we reflect we are certain of none but the present time for settling this most important concern.

*Cel.* You say right; yet, alas ! I must own, this hath been mostly the case with me for a great while. I was under conviction when very young, and not only made sensible of my need of a Saviour, but earnestly solicitous to obtain from him pardoning and renewing grace ; and for a considerable time went on with great delight in the ways of God, and found his word and ordinances administer to me peace and joy. But since, has my mind been harrassed with great disquietude, and those subjects which were wont to afford me the most pleasure, now fill me with distress and terror.

*Sar.* Have you not, my dear, lost your usual comfort, by letting down your watch, and giving way to a careless or wordly temper of mind? For this is, I know too common a case.

*Cel.* There indeed you have rightly judg'd. I fell into a cold and formal way of performing duty ; and vain, trifling amusements, the common baits to ensnare a youthful mind, so ingross'd my thoughts and time, that I, in a great measure, lost sight of spiritual and heavenly objects. And when any sermon, providence, or admonition of friends has fasten'd on my conscience, then have I been fill'd with amaze and dread. Now, what think you of a case like mine ?

*Sar.* I think and know that you are not alone

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alone in it. I have, with grief must I own it, been in the same circumstances of distress, and from the same fatal cause, my own folly, sloth and carnality : out of which I was, I bless God, roused by hearing some discourses on those words, But grow in grace. By which I plainly perceived, that, instead of growing, I was greatly on the decline ; that if there were indeed the seeds of grace sown in my heart, they seem'd far from thriving there ; which led me to fear, that I had hitherto deceiv'd myself with false hopes. Upon which, I set apart some time to humble my soul before God on this account ; and, after earnest prayer for assistance, engag'd in the too-long-neglected duty of close self-examination : in which I found great reason to hope that I discern'd some of the marks of true grace, tho' its weak declining state too visibly appear'd at the same time. On which I most attentively read and consider'd the directions, and promises made to the backslider ; particularly those in the third chapter of *Jeremiah*, and fourteenth of *Hosea* ; and did endeavour to take with me the words, and turn unto the Lord, earnestly pleading with him, that he would take away all iniquity and receive me graciously. After which, were those reviving words impress'd on my mind as tho' they had come by a voice from Heaven, ' If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, *Jesus Christ* the righteous ; and he is the propitiation for our sins,' &c. And I was, I hope, enabled by faith to apply to this blessed advocate, and to rely on him for the propitiation for my sins,

and



and commit my case to him, as my kind and powerful intercessor in the Court of Heaven; thro' whom I hope to be again admitted to favour; and from whom I prayed that I might derive those influences of grace by which this poor wither'd soul of mine might yet grow up as the corn, and flourish as the vine.

*Cel.* But is it possible for a real christian thus to decline? Does not the Scripture say, That the righteous shall hold on his way, and grow stronger and stronger?

*Sar.* This is indeed a progressive work, and the path of the just shall be as a shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day. But as oft, in that case, those clouds arise, which seem to portend returning darkness, till being scattered, we find the light on the increasing hand; so it is here. It is with the new creature as with an infant; it will if it lives, grow up to its perfect stature; yet it may, thro' the force of some disease, greatly decline in flesh and strength; and seem at a total stand as to growth: those spiritual maladies to which the christian is liable, have often the same fatal effects on him. But what is his duty in such a case? not to sit down in despair, and, because he is sick, imagine he is dead; but with speed to apply to the great Physician, who can not only forgive all his iniquities, but also heal all his diseases.

*Cel.* You, indeed, inspire me with some hope, and have I am sure, set my duty in a clear light; which is with grief to remember whence I am fallen, sincerely to repent, and diligent'ly to set about my first works.

*Sar.*

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*Sar.* I know of nothing that will be so likely to assist you in this work, and confirm and strengthen your mind, as the necessary preparation for the duty we have been discoursing of, and a due attention upon it.

*Cel.* I can come to no resolution in my present temper; but if I can get a little more compos'd, I'll engage to think of it, and let you know the result of my thoughts: in the mean time, with my thanks for this kindness, I must beg your prayers that I may be quicken'd and establish'd.

*Sar.* I shall not be unmindful of you; and I will send you a sermon of the reverend Dr. Doddridge's, entitled, The young convert invited to early communion; which may, by the blessing of God, be a means of bringing you to a fixt resolution. And I hope I shall share your prayers, as I greatly need them, that I may be enabled to walk suitably to the profession I have made; that I may remember the solemn engagements I have, before God, angels, and men, laid myself under, and keep continually on my guard, lest I should be drawn aside to disgrace that Master I profess to serve, or bring reproach on that religion I have thus openly avow'd.

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F I N I S.